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CONFIDENTIAL.

(6353.)

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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

ASIATIC TURKEY.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 6172.]

172

1892.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting Asiatic Turkey.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 6172.]

No. 1.

Vice-Consul Boyajian to Consul Hampson.—(Received at the Foreign Office, January 8, 1892.)

(No. 55.)
Sir,

Diarbekir, December 1, 1891.

IN my former despatches I have had the honour of giving you detailed accounts of the encounter between the Imperial troops and certain races of the Dersim Kurds, and of the measures which it was contemplated to take with a view of punishing the offenders. But for reasons unknown to me the plan was abandoned or postponed and the troops were withdrawn to their winter quarters, at Kharput and Erzingian. I learn now that the same Kurds, emboldened by the withdrawal of the troops, and perhaps by the inclemency of the season, which renders military operations in the mountains almost impossible, are committing acts of violence of every description upon the defenceless inhabitants of the surrounding villages, and they murdered a man belonging to Yousouf Agha, their antagonist. Such being the state of affairs, it is to be expected that in the coming spring a military expedition on a large scale will be dispatched by the Government in order to bring the turbulent Kurds to their senses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN.

No. 2.

Consul Hampson to Sir W. White.—(Received at the Foreign Office, January 8, 1892.)

(No. 113.)
Sir,

Erzeroum, December 19, 1891.

AS far back as the year 1850, Consul Brandt, in his despatches Nos. 2 and 41, drew the attention of the Embassy to the existence of valuable coal mines in this neighbourhood, and the same subject has been referred to at intervals since that date by various officers in charge of this Consulate. In spite of the fact, however, that fuel is one of the great difficulties at Erzeroum, both for household and manufacturing purposes, that wood is brought every year from greater distances, and consequently continually increases in dearness; and that, from this cause, the establishment of any machine-worked industry practically impossible here, the Government has steadily refused all permission to exploit the coal which is known to exist.

At the present moment a small two-wheeled ox-cart load of wood is sold for 160 piastres = 30*s*. The result is that in all the villages and in the town, except in houses of the well-to-do, no fuel is burnt but the dry dung of horses and camels, known as "tezek," and, consequently, that the use of manure for agricultural purposes is unknown, and that the use of fuel to work machinery is absolutely prohibited. As an instance of this I may mention that a merchant of the town contemplates introducing machinery for the manufacture of macaroni, a manufacture which, with the quantity of wheat grown here, of which frequently no use can be made, and considering the large

amount of macaroni which is consumed by the natives, offers every prospect of success. He informs me, however, that he will be obliged to work his machinery by horses. I believe this to be one of the chief causes why a large town like Erzeroum is without one single industry. It is, therefore, difficult to understand the suicidal policy of the Government in refusing either to work the coal themselves, or to grant permission to any one else to do so. I am assured by a gentleman who has carefully examined the matter that within ten hours, or from 20 to 30 miles of this town, there exist two rich coal-fields, the coal of excellent quality, and of which a large output might be easily obtained at a very small cost. For several years past he has continually applied for permission to work these mines, but has always been refused, on the ground that the coal was worthless, or that the Government had decided not to work it until all the coal in Europe was consumed!

Nor is coal the only valuable natural product thus neglected, although it is the one the necessity for which is most pressing. I am assured that within a radius of 3 miles from one of the coal-fields exist rich silver and copper mines, permission to work which has also been refused. Gold and boracite have also been found in the same district, and in another district a spring of petroleum of excellent quality is known to exist.

It is to be hoped that the day may soon come when all these riches will no longer be allowed to be idle.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 3.

Consul Hampson to Sir W. White.—(Received at the Foreign Office, January 8, 1892.)

(No. 114.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, December 19, 1891.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the Governor-General returned here yesterday after an absence of three months and a-half, during which he has been making a tour of inspection in the Tortoum, Ispir, Baibourt, and Erzingian districts.

Tranquillity exists throughout this vilayet, and Vice-Consul Devey, who arrived here two days ago from Van on his way to England, reports that all was quiet in the districts through which he passed.

I learn that his Excellency the Vali has received a telegram from His Imperial Majesty the Sultan approving the manner in which he has conducted his administration.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 4.

Consul Hampson to Sir W. White.—(Received at the Foreign Office, January 8, 1892.)

(No. 115. Confidential.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, December 19, 1891.*

THE following statement came to me through a respectable and trustworthy Armenian from Alashgerd, who declared himself perfectly certain of the facts, concerning which he expressed the greatest regret and apprehension.

At Igdyr, the frontier town in Russia on the border of Alashgerd, there has been established a depôt of new Berdan rifles bearing the Russian Government mark, though sometimes the latter is half effaced. One of these rifles, together with fifty cartridges, is handed over to any Armenian who applies (on his producing papers to prove his Armenian nationality) for the nominal price of 50 piastres. It is said that over 200 rifles from this source have already been smuggled across the Turkish frontier. The delivery and removal of these arms at the depôt in Igdyr is conducted with hardly a pretence of secrecy, the Russian police making no attempt to prevent it.

Such proceedings, if true, are likely to lead to very serious consequences when the Turkish Government becomes awake to them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 5.

Mr. Fane to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 8.)

(No. 5.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 4, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Bahri Pasha, formerly Governor-General of the Vilayet of Scutari, has been appointed Governor-General of the Vilayet of Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND FANE.

No. 6.

Mr. Hampson to Sir W. White.—(Received at the Foreign Office January 22, 1892.)

(No. 116.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, December 26, 1891.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency of the arrest of a large number of Armenians from the Narman district, supposed to be implicated in the recent murder of four Turks. The theory of the Government is that these murders are the revenge taken by the Armenians for the death of three of their number, which occurred in August 1890, and which Consul Lloyd does not appear to have reported to your Excellency.

The facts, as far as they are known, are briefly as follows.

In August 1890, three Armenians—two brothers and a cousin—of the village of Vekhihass, went with two Turks of Hitchoglou to the forest of Petker. The Turks returned alone, and the Armenians not reappearing, their relations, after ten days, went in search of them, and discovered their dead bodies in the forest. The two Turks were arrested; but, after being kept in prison only two months, were released, and no further steps were taken to punish the murderers of the Armenians.

This autumn, between two and three months ago, a Turk from the village of Eyid Tortoum, started for Nikhakh, but never reached it. Three more Turks, among them the two who were accused of the murders last year, went to look for the former, but also disappeared. On a search being instituted, the bodies of the three last were found in a ruined "yaila" (summer cottage in the mountains) near Eyid. The body of the fourth Turk has not been found.

On this, the Kaïmakam of Nikhakh, suspecting, on not unreasonable grounds as it seems to me, that the Armenians of Vekhihass, the relations and friends of those murdered last year, were implicated in these fresh murders, arrested twenty-three of them, and sent them here to Erzeroum, where they are at present in prison. In addition to these, twenty-two have been subsequently arrested, and are in custody at Nikhakh, and orders have been issued for the arrest of eight more.

The prisoners, on the other hand, declare that their village is five hours distant from the scene of the murder; that there are several Turkish villages far nearer to it; that they are, in that district, numerically far too weak to venture on any such method of retaliation, and that they are innocent of any complicity in these crimes. They also complain that they were very roughly treated and beaten at Nikhakh in order to make them confess.

It has also been more than once stated to me, on what grounds I am unable to decide, that considerable armed bands of Armenians from Russia are in the habit of making marauding expeditions into the Narman district; that they, if Armenians at all, are to be held responsible for the murders, and that the object of the Government in making so many arrests is to obtain, if possible, some proof against these Russian Armenians.

I am bound to confess that a year's residence in this country has made me very sceptical of all Armenian statements, unless supported by very good evidence.

In any case, however, it appears to me indisputable that the origin of all this trouble is the neglect of the Local Government to secure the proper punishment of the murderers of the three Armenians last year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 7.

Mr. Hampson to Sir W. White.—(Received at the Foreign Office, January 22.)

(No. 5.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, January 9, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that Khalil Bey, Vali of Van, has been dismissed from that post, and that Bahri Pasha, formerly Vali of Scutari, in Albania, has been appointed to Van. Bahri Pasha was recently named Commander of the 7th Division of the 4th Army Corps, but had not yet arrived here to take up his command. His successor in that post is not known here. Meanwhile Yahia Pasha continues to act as Commander.

In contradiction to the favourable opinion which Vice-Consul Devey has several times expressed in regard to Khalil Bey, his dismissal, and the appointment of Bahri Pasha, meets generally with very marked approval here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 8.

Mr. Fane to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received January 22.)

(No. 14.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 12, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, reporting the mobilization of the reserves in that military district.

There is no reason, however, to attach any special importance to this measure, it being one merely of an administrative nature.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND FANE.

Inclosure in No. 8.

Mr. Hampson to Sir W. White.

Sir, *Erzeroum, January 2, 1892.*

ON Tuesday last I had the honour to send your Excellency a telegram, informing you that orders had been received here for the immediate mobilization of the reserves in this district.

On Monday afternoon I saw Yahia Pasha, who is in command of the 7th Division of the 4th Army Corps, but could learn nothing from him but the confirmation of the fact. He stated that, as far as he knew, the reserves had only been summoned for inspection.

At the same time, however, I heard from many sources, both official and unofficial, that the order was supposed to be in consequence of news received from Bagdad, and this view is still generally maintained. What this news is exactly it has been impossible to ascertain.

The most prevalent story is that the Persians have attempted to occupy some place near Bagdad, Kerbala being most named.

Another, and apparently more probable story, is, that there is trouble with some Arab tribe near Bagdad.

The only thing certain is, that the Redif has been summoned to arms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

P.S.—I have just learnt that it has been decided that the reserves shall not be actually called to arms at present, but only enrolled, and ordered to hold themselves in readiness at a moment's notice.

I also hear it said that the troubles in the Yemen are the real cause of this measure.

C. S. H.

No. 9.

Acting Consul Hampson to Mr. Fane.—(Received at the Foreign Office, February 5.)

(No. 6.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, January 16, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that, in consequence of telegraphic orders from Constantinople, two Armenians from Bayazid, one a priest named Narsess, the other a respectable merchant named Kaspar, were, a few days ago, brought here under arrest on their way to Kustanich, to which place they have been exiled.

The accusation on which this sentence has been passed is, that they gave information to an English newspaper correspondent at Igdyr, presumably Mr. Fitzgerald.

I understand that the Turkish Government acted on information received from a Russian source.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 10.

Acting Consul Hampson to Mr. Fane.—(Received at the Foreign Office, February 5.)

(No. 8.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, January 16, 1892.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 116 of the 26th December, 1891, respecting the arrest of forty-five Armenians in the Narman district, accused of being implicated in the murder of four Turks, I have now the honour to state that thirteen more Armenians have been arrested. The prisoners at Nikhakh complain of very harsh and cruel treatment, and it is said that they have been tortured by the application of red-hot pincers. Of this I have, however, no reliable information.

Eight Armenians from Alashgerd, who have been in prison here for over a year (*vide* No. 1, list of prisoners, inclosed in my despatch No. 28 of the 21st March, 1891), were released a few days ago.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 11.

Consul Longworth to Mr. Fane.—(Received at the Foreign Office, February 20.)

(No. 4.)
Sir, *Trebizond, February 1, 1892.*

I BEG to follow up my Report for 1890 by a similarly concise review on the status of the vilayet in 1891.

The Executive, on the whole, have made a decided advancement in the transaction of public business. The promptitude displayed by the Governor-General, Aali Bey, has penetrated itself into almost all the Departments. The introduction of the electric bell at the authorities did away with the possibility of evading a call, and helped considerably to keep the officials in at their work.

In the district towns a result almost as good was arrived at by the issue of a Circular ordering, on the pain of pecuniary punishment, to attend to, and answer all documents and telegrams within three days of their receipt. The earnestness of the order was soon proved. The Kaïmakams of Surmench and Off were the ones who suffered the penalty of dilatoriness. They had a month's pay cut down by one fourth for their inertness. The rule is a most salutary one. If it is kept up with due severity, we shall perhaps in time hear less of that laxity and procrastination so often brought to the charge of Ottoman officials.

His Excellency, Aali Bey, has undoubtedly strong characteristics of his own. They seem on the whole to have stood him in good need. His integrity, patriotism, and public spirit for instance bore him through the innumerable intrigues of his enemies. Finding his official life unassailable, some stooped as low as to attack him in the seclusion and privacy of his domestic life. His tippling, dancing, card playing, &c., were not only eyed askance, but were reported to the Sultan with all exaggeration,

but to no purpose. One of his more malignant foes went so far as to threaten to spend 5,000*l.* for his removal. He was, however, somewhat disconcerted by the Vali suggesting to him personally as a cheaper, quicker, safer and surer means, his purchasing from him direct the resignation of the Governor-Generalship.

One more word and I have done with these personalities. The marriage at Trebizond of his Excellency to Miss Georgiades, a Greek lady of Constantinople, was greatly commented upon at the time. The old cherished ideas on religion were made to clash by the wedding. It was viewed, however, with less suspicion by those of the Mahommedan, than with jealousy by those of the Orthodox faith. The feelings it engendered were bitter enough, for such marriages as a rule are thought to involve the question of loss or gain to the Church or Mosque, or rather to the Crescent or the Cross.

A progressive improvement to some extent was perceptible in public security. The lawless were made to feel more than ever the severity of the Executive. Though 11 brigands were killed against 15 in 1890, no less than 156 were captured against 94 of the year preceding. The number of murder cases, moreover, stood at 2 against 3 in acts of brigandage, nil against 2 in burglary, nil against 3 in blood feuds, and 3 against 3 in immoral brawls. Cases of abduction number, however, 8 against 5 which are, perhaps, few enough among a people so lewd and at the same time so unruly.

The gendarmerie in the pursuit of criminals had 3 against 3 wounded, and none against 3 killed. Those rewarded number 10 against 28 by promotion, 25 against 26 by medals, and none against 20 by gratuities in money.

Larceny and burglary, rape and sodomy appear to have been on the increase. This may be accounted for, partly by the fact that magisterial work in small offences was added to the ordinary duties of Police Commissionaries, and chiefly by the fact that the insufficient police corps in the vilayet was reduced for reasons of economy from 34 to 24 all told.

The Returns obtained from the Criminal Courts at Trebizond show 63 malefactors condemned in 1891, against 54 in 1890, to various terms of imprisonment. The numbers include two death sentences against six of the previous year committed as usual to life imprisonments. The Sultan's reluctance to sign a death warrant is well known. It was instanced here during the year by the payment of 700*l.* out of His Majesty's privy purse, as blood money and incidental expenses to a Turk who claimed capital punishment for the murderers of his two sons.

The prison registers give for the endings of the last two years, 308 against 267 Mahommedans, and 12 against 17 Christians as the number of those incarcerated in local gaols, while those transported figure as 6 against 21. It is to be regretted that offenders committed for trial are sometimes forgotten in prison. A Turk who for theft was after eight months' confinement sentenced to three months only, is a case in point.

The administration of justice in district towns appears to have been as defective as ever. The dismissal for corruption, however, of the Cadi and Azahs of the Court at Fatza tended latterly to make others a little more scrupulous in their discharge of judicial functions.

Religion as usual was a prolific cause of strife and discord. The Greeks convulsed themselves about their Archbishop, the Armenians amused themselves by intrigues against native Protestants, while the Turks showed a livelier interest than ever in conversions to Islamism, which figure in 1891 as 5 men and 9 women against 5 men and 2 women in 1890. Hence it is perhaps that the Central Government at Constantinople gave some of its attention to such matters as places of worship and rights of colporteurs.

The efforts of the authorities, at times frantic efforts, to discover sedition among the Armenians, were happily kept in abeyance during the summer months. Measures almost as strenuous, however, were renewed in November, though all those arrested succeeded in exculpating themselves within a few days.

In fiscal matters though, the country through good crops and better sale of tithes brought money into the coffers, the order of the year was economy. This may be explained by the fact that remittances to the Palace having had to be proportionately greater, so much so that roads and bridges damaged by the floods of July last, had, from want of money, to be left unrepaired to the serious detriment of trade and traffic in general.

As regards commerce, the claims of import duties on goods declared rightly or wrongly as nontransited to Persia, caused a month's stoppage of that particular trade. The question is still an open one. Whenever the dispute between the Customs

authorities and transit agents is brought to a settlement, a distinction between an honest merchant and a contrabandist, it is to be hoped, will be made on the production of documentary evidence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 12.

The Archbishop of Canterbury to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received February 25.)

My Lord, *Lambeth Palace, London, February* 24, 1892.

HAVING heard from influential and trustworthy sources in Cilicia of the condemnation of the Bishop of Zeytoon and forty-five other Armenians of Cilicia, under circumstances which appear to have been unfavourable to the accused, and to involve a very severe, if not harsh and unfair, sentence, and having been requested to approach your Lordship on the subject, with a view to making inquiries of our Ambassador at the Porte, and, if necessary, to mediating on their behalf, I venture to lay before your Lordship the inclosed letters, and to ask that your Lordship will do me the favour to cause such inquiries to be made.

I feel sure that, if the case is a deserving one, it will have your Lordship's sympathy and support.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. CANTUAR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 12.

The Bishop of Adana to the Lord Bishop of Salisbury.

(Translation.)

To his Grace and Holy Brother in Christ: *Adana, November* 18 (30), 1891.

SALUTING your Lordship in the Lord, I entreat you humbly that you please, for the sake of our Lord Jesus, to listen with perfect attention to the application of Mr. Karekin G. Essayian on behalf of the Armenian Bishop of Zeytoon and his forty-five fellow brothers. For a year past they have been imprisoned in Aleppo, and suffering under great affliction without any cause, as if they had been stirrers-up of revolution. And they want the help of some philanthropic men.

Good brother, if it is possible, condescend to act as a mediator with his (Grace) Holiness the Archbishop of Canterbury and other men of high rank, that they may favour us (Armenians), and find a way of freedom for these prisoners of Zeytoon and their Bishop. And, for this good purpose, let them condescend to ask from his Excellence the British Ambassador in Constantinople to mediate for them before the Porte. By doing this you will much oblige all Armenians, and specially the poor and miserable people of Zeytoon, and I myself will be for ever most grateful.

The Prayer of—
(Signed) Y. VEHABEDIAN,
Bishop of Adana.

Inclosure 2 in No. 12.

Mr. Hagopian to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

(Extract.) 25, *Chesilton Road, Fulham, February* 15, 1892.

WITHIN the last two or three weeks a deed of harsh severity and injustice has been perpetrated at Constantinople against one of our most eminent Armenian prelates, which, in my humble opinion, ought not to go unchallenged, and which ought to call forth the active sympathy of all generous-minded Churchmen throughout the world, and especially of the clergy of the Church of England, of which your Grace is at once the great ornament and head. . . . . .

Archbishop Khorène Nar Bey Lusignan has, no doubt at the desire of the Sublime Porte, been dismissed from his preachership at the Armenian church of Beshiktash, and from all active functions in the Church to which he is entitled by his position; and, by the decision of an extraordinary Commission, sitting at Yildiz Kiosk, he has

been condemned to perpetual detention in some fortress for a seditious correspondence. He has not been publicly tried on any of the charges brought against him. His guilt in Turkish eyes is that he was in correspondence with his nephew, Léon Bey, now residing in Paris, and formerly employed in the "Bureau de la Presse," on the Turkish Censorship, who is suspected of having published articles unfavourable to Turkey in the French press.

But your Grace might ask who Archbishop Khorène is. It is the same who wished to bring out a cheap and correct edition of the Armenian Bible as read in the churches, and your Grace has still under consideration his request for the necessary funds; and I have sent some years ago my own copy of the Bible for your Lordship's inspection. He is at once a man of letters, a poet, scholar, and a most effective and eloquent preacher, well known for his liberal opinions and patriotism. Educated at the Convent of the Mekhitarists at Venice, he joined the National Church of his forefathers some thirty years ago. During the visit of the French Empress Eugénie to Constantinople, in 1869, he delivered an address of welcome in French at the French Embassy, on behalf of the Armenians, whose felicity of language and diction elicited the admiration of Her Majesty. My own acquaintance with him dates from 1870, and we have been always on the friendliest terms. During my three weeks' visit at Constantinople, in the winter of 1881-82, I met him at a reception given at the British Embassy by Lord and Lady Dufferin. He was several times Chairman of the Ecclesiastical Council at the Patriarchate for periods of two years each, thus occupying a position immediately next to the Patriarch in dignity. His knowledge of European languages and distinguished manners always made him a welcome guest in Pera society. In 1884 he delivered the funeral sermon on the occasion of the death of our ever-to-be-remembered Patriarch Nersès, which I had the honour of summarizing in a letter I addressed to the "Times," giving an account of the life and work of the Patriarch. It was by his exertions at St. Stefano with General Ignatieff that the Armenians secured Article XVI of the Treaty of the same name, afterwards replaced by LXI in the Treaty of Berlin.

No. 13.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 50.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 27, 1892.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith a copy of a letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury requesting that inquiries may be made with regard to the reported conviction of the Bishop of Zeitoun and forty-five other Armenians of Cilicia on charges of sedition.*

In his despatch No. 474 of the 19th November last, the late Sir William White forwarded a Report from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo to the effect that the judicial proceedings in the case had already lasted four months, and that the final trial of the prisoners was fixed for the 18th November. Since that date no further information has reached the Foreign Office on the subject.

I have to request your Excellency to ascertain and report to me the result of the proceedings taken against the Bishop and the other Armenian prisoners.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 14.

Vice-Consul Boyajian to Acting Consul Hampson.—(Received at the Foreign Office, March 4.)

(No. 5.)
Sir, *Diarbekir, January* 26, 1892.

IN my despatch No. 45, dated the 19th September, 1891, I have had the honour of giving you a detailed account of the deplorable condition of Palu Caza, one of the districts of this province. His Excellency Surri Pasha, the present Governor-General, on his arrival received full information as to the state of things there, and after an investigation, being satisfied that the Kaïmakam, on account of his incapacity and

* The Archbishop of Canterbury, February 24, 1892.

other causes, was not able to cope with the existing difficulties, caused the change of that functionary, and dismissed some other local officials. I have the satisfaction of informing you now that since then the reports from different sources that I receive confirm that fact that the said district is tranquillized, and the same statement may be made regarding the other districts of the vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN.

No. 15.

Acting Consul Hampson to Mr. Fane.—(Received at the Foreign Office, March 4.)

(No. 12.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, February* 15, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that Mgr. Shishmanian, the Armenian Archbishop, has sent in his resignation to the Patriarchate.

The reason of this step is said to be the complaints made by the Armenian community of the want of energy of the Archbishop to press the Vali for the release, or, at least, for the examination, of the many Armenians from the Narman district who have been detained for several months in prison here, as reported in my despatches No. 176 of the 26th December, 1891, and No. 8 of the 16th January, 1892.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 16.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 4.)

(No. 72.)
(Extract.) *Constantinople, February* 28, 1892.

IN the course of conversation his Excellency spoke of the Asiatic provinces of Turkey, and stated that he was sorry to see that an English newspaper (the "Daily News") had made statements respecting them which were not only unfavourable to Turkey, but calculated to produce most erroneous impressions abroad on the subject.

I replied that the statements he alluded to had not come under my notice, but that, in my opinion, the best policy for Turkey to pursue in the appointment of Governors to provinces—particularly where Christian populations prevailed—was to select the best and most trustworthy officials for such posts, whose administration of them could produce no legitimate cause of complaint.

No. 17.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 4.)

(No. 75.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 29, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that upon the receipt of your despatch No. 40 of the 16th instant, inquiring whether there is any foundation for the statement made in the "Daily News" of the 12th instant respecting the imprisonment of about 700 Armenians in the provinces awaiting trial on political charges, inquiries were at once addressed to Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, instructing him to report fully upon the correctness of this statement, and I shall not fail to inform your Lordship at the earliest possible moment of Mr. Hampson's reply.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 18.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 67.)
Foreign Office, March 17, 1892.

Sir,

I THINK it desirable, on the occasion of your assumption of the duties of Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Sultan, to invite your Excellency's attention to the question of the condition of the Asiatic provinces of Turkey, and to the correspondence on the subject which is in the Embassy archives.

Owing to the difficulty of securing any concerted action in the matter by the Powers parties to the Treaty of Berlin, Her Majesty's Government have, of late years, desisted from urging upon the Porte the introduction of general reforms in fulfilment of its obligations under Article LXI of that Treaty, and have confined themselves to bringing to the notice of the Sultan's Ministers the most prominent instances of misgovernment and outrage which have been reported by Her Majesty's Consular officers.

Her Majesty's Government would wish your Excellency to continue to act on these lines, and to lose no opportunity, in which it appears to you that such a course can be pursued with the prospect of an advantageous result, of urging upon the Grand Vizier the great importance, in the interests of the Turkish Empire, as well as on the score of humanity, of the redress of the legitimate grievances of the Christian subjects of the Sultan, especially by the adoption of measures for the better security of their lives and property, and for their protection against the lawless depredations of the Kurds.

Her Majesty's Government are glad to believe, from the reports of the British Consular officers, that upon the whole there has been a considerable improvement in the general administration during the last few years, and that the local officials have shown a more genuine desire to maintain order and to establish a more equitable system of government than had previously prevailed. It is, however, abundantly clear that there is still great need of improvement in this respect; and Her Majesty's Government are convinced that so long as no remedy is provided for legitimate grievances the discontent and irritation prevailing among the Christian population will continue to exercise a most injurious effect upon the welfare and stability of the Ottoman Empire.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 19.

Acting Consul Hampson to Mr. Fane.—(Received at the Foreign Office, March 18.)

(No. 14.)
Erzeroum, February 27, 1892.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform you that a few days ago a message from the Patriarch was read in the Armenian churches here to the effect that, unless intrigue ceased among the Armenian population, the Ottoman Government would be obliged to proclaim a state of siege throughout the country. In Van, also, a similar message has been read. All is quiet here, and Mr. Fitzmaurice reports that all is quiet in Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 20.

Acting Consul Hampson to Mr. Fane.—(Received at the Foreign Office, March 18.)

(No. 16.)
Erzeroum, February 27, 1892.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I learn from a trustworthy source that the Jehali tribe of Kurds, near Bayazid, have been fighting among themselves, the cause of the quarrel being the question as to which of the various Chiefs was to hold

the leading rank in the new cavalry. Seventeen men and a woman have been killed, and twenty-eight men wounded.

From near the north of the Van Lake I hear that the Haideranli tribe have also come to blows on the same subject, six men having been killed.

I fear that much trouble must be expected before the Kurds can be brought into anything approaching military order.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 21.

Acting Consul Hampson to Mr. Fane.—(Received at the Foreign Office, March 18.)

(No. 17.)
Erzeroum, March 5, 1892.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform you that a large number of Armenians, it is said as many as 250, have been arrested at Moosh, their offence being the preparation of Petitions to the Russian Government, asking to be taken under Russian protection.

At the time when these proceedings were discovered, and the arrests took place, twelve of these Petitions had been prepared, and had received over 2,000 signatures. I am told that disturbances have taken place, and that there have been some killed and wounded; but of this I have no reliable information. Owing to bad weather, and the immense quantity of snow, no post has reached us from that direction for a fortnight.

I should have telegraphed this information to you; but the only employé at the telegraph office who understands Latin characters and figures has, for some time, been ill with pneumonia, the result of influenza. Consequently we are unable to send or receive any telegrams except in Turkish. This might be the cause of very serious inconvenience; and I would venture to suggest that the authorities at Constantinople should be advised of the necessity of supplying Erzeroum with more competent telegraph officials. The Russian Consul-General has already written to his Embassy in the same sense.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 22.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 18.)

(No. 81. Confidential.)
Constantinople, March 9, 1892.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy in French translation of a Petition addressed to me in Armenian by the Armenian community of Arapkii, in the Sandjak of Kharpout, containing copy of another Petition from the same source addressed to His Majesty the Sultan and the Armenian Patriarch.

This Petition draws attention to the injustice experienced by the Armenian population at the hands of the Turkish authorities, and complains of the burdensome taxes imposed upon them, also of the illegal and arbitrary imprisonment of their co-religionists. It further requests that a high functionary may be dispatched to open an investigation into the various complaints set forth.

A copy of this Petition has also been sent to the Russian, French, German, and Persian Embassies in this capital.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure in No. 22.

Pétition de la Communauté Arménienne d'Arabkir adressée à son Excellence l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre à Constantinople.

(Traduction.)

Excellence,

DEPUIS plusieurs siècles que la communauté Arménienne s'est trouvée sous la sujétion du Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman, les Arméniens d'Arabkir se sont distingués toujours par leur obéissance à la dynastie Ottomane. Mais les fonctionnaires du Gouvernement, qui sont toujours les mêmes, ne font que voler et usurper chaque année la population tant Chrétienne que Musulmane de la localité, en se laissant corrompre par des présents et en passant outre à toute loi et réglement.

Tout le monde tâche d'éviter autant que possible de recourir aux autorités, avec la même crainte comme s'il aurait à traverser une localité occupée par des brigands. C'est l'argent qui fait la justice; si vous avez de l'argent, vous êtes sûr d'avoir gagné votre procès ainsi que le Tribunal; si, au contraire, vous n'en avez pas, votre juste réclamation devient un malheur pour vous, et alors vous passez toute votre vie dans les coins ténébreux des prisons, à moins que vous ne donniez comme présent le prix du pain de votre pauvre famille.

Dans une telle situation, de concert avec les caprices et les volontés des fonctionnaires du Gouvernement, il faut que l'homme accepte l'injustice pour un acte d'équité, et une cause juste pour le contraire. C'est une vérité des plus saillantes, et souvent, le peuple lorsqu'il est sujet à un déni ou à une injustice, il est obligé de se taire et de ne pas s'y opposer, car si quelqu'un est lésé et qu'il demandera justice, il est bien persuadé par des preuves journalières qu'il sera lésé de nouveau, et s'il est rossé, il en sera de même. Si, au contraire, il ose insister que la justice soit faite, il est mis dans un cachot où la respiration est impossible. Et là qui sait, il serait victime de toutes sortes de calomnies. Ceci est devenu une habitude.

Si un fonctionnaire par un sentiment de bienveillance viendrait à protester contre une injustice, on tâche de le faire taire de suite, ou en le faisant destituer, ou bien par divers autres moyens. Le meurtre du nommé Youssouf Effendi, agent de police, est une preuve de ce que nous venons d'exposer. Cet homme jouissait de l'estime et de l'affection du peuple tant Chrétien que Mahométan, et il nous était très aimé pour sa justesse et ses loyaux services. Il n'y a pas de doute que ce meurtre a été commis lorsque le susdit agent revenait d'un banquet où d'autres fonctionnaires se sont trouvés aussi et où il y avait eu des discussions animées et tumultueuses entre eux.

Le Gouvernement local sait très bien cet événement; cependant, comme il en était lui-même l'auteur; il voulait, par tous les moyens possibles, que l'affaire ne soit pas éclaircie, et ayant fermé l'œil, s'est mis à calomnier plusieurs personnes. De cette façon, quelques jeunes gens innocents se trouvent emprisonnés dans les cachots de Kharpourt, sans qu'ils aient commis le moindre délit, comme d'ailleurs l'instruction a démontré leur innocence. Néanmoins, on ne cesse pas de répandre le bruit disant que la justice a trouvé l'auteur du crime, et ce uniquement pour avoir la satisfaction d'avoir caché leur culpabilité; hélas! la population est convaincue que tôt ou tard la vérité sera connue. Que ne fait-elle pas, cette Administration composée de tyrans?

Les lois disent que le remboursement des impôts sera effectué moyennant quatre versements; nous sommes au septième mois de l'année et il ne reste que très peu de chose à payer de notre impôt. Il y a parmi nous des familles nécessiteuses qui n'ont pas les moyens de se procurer le prix du pain quotidien de leurs enfants, desquelles les Receveurs exigent d'avance le payement de l'impôt; et lorsque l'une d'elles aurait à faire la moindre observation, on le met de suite en prison sur l'ordre d'un simple gendarme ou d'un Tchavouch qui la couvre de toutes sorte d'injures et de mauvais traitements. Dans ce cachot l'individu passe plusieurs nuits sombres jusqu'au jour où ce même Agha l'ait relâché par pitié.

Celui qui a un parent un peu dans l'aisance peut s'estimer heureux, car les autorités s'adressent à ce dernier pour lui faire payer par force les impôts réclamés, et de cette façon l'individu est mis en liberté: sinon, il est retenu, jusqu'à ce que les taxes, dont le jour de payement n'est pas encore arrivé, soient réglées par le produit de la vente de tout ce qu'on trouve chez l'individu en fait de mobilier, lits, et habits. Dans cet intervalle où le soutien de la famille se trouvait emprisonné, les enfants et la femme sont exposés à toute sorte de privations, car personne dans le pays ne songe à avoir soin de la famille. De cette façon, un père de famille se voit exposé continuellement à des illégalités et dans des situations des plus difficiles.

Tandis que le Gouvernement Impérial se borne à percevoir en nature la dîme sur toutes les récoltes, les fonctionnaires exigent que toutes les dîmes soient payées en espèces sonnantes, à l'exception du blé, qui est perçu en nature. Ils réclament des sommes d'argent équivalent presque au prix d'un quart de la récolte, et ainsi le pauvre paysan est obligé d'obéir malgré lui et de payer de suite l'argent demandé illégalement, sachant bien que ça peut lui coûter bien plus cher s'il oserait faire la moindre opposition ou remarque. De cette façon, il ne reste au pauvre paysan que le dixième de la récolte. Les Receveurs publics ici sont les fonctionnaires eux-mêmes, qui ne pensent qu'à s'enrichir au détriment des pauvres en les exposant continuellement dans des situations difficiles.

Plus d'une fois on avait déposé des plaintes contre Osman Fehmi Effendi, Sous-Gouverneur de notre ville, tant au Vali qu'au Patriarcat, ainsi qu'au Ministère de l'Intérieur, mais aucune satisfaction ne nous a été donnée jusqu'à présent. Le susdit Sous-Gouverneur, loin de penser à la sécurité et au bien de la ville, s'occupe exclusivement de semer la haine, et de troubler la paix, prétextant l'existence de ce *Comité* imaginaire, et ce uniquement pour obtenir un avancement. Cependant, comme il a été prouvé par le temps, ce n'était qu'une chimère et non pas une réalité de fait.

Il y avait cependant des individus qui, chassés par la société humaine, ont été l'objet d'une grande importance de la part du Gouvernement Local, pour faire de l'espionnage.

Plusieurs personnes comme il faut et jouissant d'une bonne réputation ont été arrêtées et conduites à Kharpourt pendant la nuit sous escorte, et des perquisitions domiciliaires ont eu lieu dans 200 maisons.

De ce chef la communauté encourut des pertes énormes, car ceux qui étaient chargés de faire des perquisitions domiciliaires, ainsi que les soldats, n'ont fait que casser et démolir tout ce qu'ils trouvaient dans les maisons, et piller même les provisions de bouche des familles.

Tous les colis arrivés de Constantinople, ainsi que les malles des voyageurs, sont fouillés, mais on ne trouve que des livres de prières. Cette formalité est pour la communauté Arménienne une peine dure. Toutes ces persécutions ont été faites sans arriver à aucun résultat. Néanmoins, le Sous-Gouverneur ne cesse de rapporter et de télégraphier au Vali toutes les affaires et tous les cas, quels qu'ils soient, en leur donnant des nuances et des tournures différentes, et avec ces procédés il est parvenu à faire venir ici un autre détachement de soldats en dehors de ceux déjà existants.

Nous ignorons quelles étaient ses instructions en faisant venir ici ce nouveau détachement, si ce n'est qu'occasionner au Gouvernement des dépenses énormes. Ces soldats faisaient dans la journée la tournée de la ville, divisés en différentes patrouilles et personne ne savait dans quel but. Ainsi notre Sous-Gouverneur a semé partout la terreur, de manière que les uns ont eu des coups d'apoplexie et les autres sont devenus la cause de l'avortement de leurs femmes. Si quelqu'un avait une haine contre un autre, il n'avait qu'à dire quelques mensonges au Sous-Gouverneur, et il s'était vengé. Car ce dernier ordonnait l'emprisonnement immédiat de l'individu sans procéder à une instruction, ou bien il l'envoyait à Kharpourt auprès du Gouverneur. Et si quelqu'un osérait faire la moindre observation contre l'injustice dont il est l'objet, il est de suite condamné comme rebelle.

Dans cette ville l'injustice règne sur des bases solides et la justice est devenue tout à fait ridicule. Il nous est impossible de fréquenter les membres de notre clergé, qui étaient notre consolation dans toutes les occasions, puisque les fonctionnaires publics avaient fait toute sorte de calomnies contre nos prêtres, et ce uniquement pour donner une nuance véridique aux accusations et aux faits imaginaires allégués au peuple Arménien.

Plusieurs personnes haut placées ont été emprisonnées sur les déclarations calomnieuses d'un individu au service de l'Église, lequel avoue aujourd'hui qu'il avait été aveuglé par des promesses fausses dont il fut le dupe. Les autorités, sans prendre en considération les lois et la qualité ecclésiatique, ont arrêtés plusieurs chanoines et chantres qui se trouvent en ce moment dans des cachots sans avoir commis le moindre délit. Pourquoi ces fonctionnaires ne sont-ils pas reconnus coupables et ne subissent-ils pas la punition qu'ils méritent pour leurs procédés illégaux?

Les vols nocturnes ont lieu dans la ville ainsi que toutes sortes de crimes, du mal et du pillage pendant le jour. Un diacre fut battu jusqu'à la mort par des soldats au service du Sous-Gouverneur, un enfant étranglé, et une fille enlevée par un Turc, sans être punis, comme si rien n'avait eu lieu. Des centaines d'Arméniens furent emprisonnés disant que ce sont les Arméniens qui commettent ces vols. Mais le hasard

fait souvent que la vérité soit connue. On découvre les voleurs qui sont les soldats désignés pour la garde de la ville et qui demeurent chez le Sous-Gouverneur. Des voleurs Musulmans saisis en flagrant délit sont restés impunis et se trouvent en ce moment au service des fonctionnaires publics. Il n'est pas possible que le peuple puisse formuler des plaintes ou faire la moindre protestation contre ces faits arbitraires et illégaux, car il doit se heurter à des difficultés innombrables. Les employés du bureau postal et télégraphique de notre ville refusent d'accepter nos lettres et nos télégrammes, surtout lorsqu'il est constaté que ces lettres ou télégrammes contiennent des rapports défavorables à quelqu'un, quelque soit le fonctionnaire ou l'employé dont on se plaint. Ceci prouve d'une manière suffisante qu'il y a partout unanimité pour empêcher tout moyen pouvant faire connaître la vérité. Toutes nos lettres arrivées à la poste, ainsi que celles qui seront expédiées, sont examinées, lues, et pesées et restent de cette façon dans les bureaux postaux pendant des semaines et des mois entiers. Comment voulez-vous porter plainte ou protester lorsque toutes les voies de correspondance, telles que le courrier ou le télégraphe, vous sont fermées. Le but du Gouvernement n'est autre que d'attribuer aux Arméniens tout fait ou délit. Malheur à celui qui refuse de s'incliner devant les caprices des fonctionnaires. Il reste en prison pendant un laps de temps assez long, jusqu'à ce qu'il donne un bakchiche. Nous ne savons pas pourquoi nos Évêques et nos prêtres furent éloignés de nous. Ce sera sans doute dans le but de pouvoir poursuivre librement leurs persécutions morales et matérielles sans rencontrer des obstacles. L'Église et l'Évêché furent presque fermées, et l'envie a poussé le Gouvernement Local de se mêler aussi de nos écoles et de nous priver d'un professeur. Il a voulu que nous l'eussions renvoyé du service et il s'est mis à le tyranniser. Cette nouvelle a fait une pénible impression au susdit professeur et il fut obligé de retourner dans son pays. Celui qui veut voyager est arrêté et l'on arrête même les artisans qui s'occupent exclusivement de leur métier; on les conduit aux prisons de Kharpourt, en faisant toutes sortes de calomnies à leur égard; et quoique l'instruction ait établi leur innocence, ils y sont retenus quand même sans être relâchés, jusqu'à ce qu'ils donnent un bakchiche.

Il est de coutume que les artisans ambulants aillent de village en village pour gagner de quoi acheter le pain de leur famille. Mais lorsque ces artisans villageois se trouvent emprisonnés, comment voulez-vous qu'ils soient à même de pouvoir procurer leur pain quotidien? Ainsi des centaines de familles restent dépourvus de tout moyen d'existence sans pouvoir trouver un morceau de pain à manger. La situation de la ville est très mauvaise; il n'y a ni travail, ni boutiques à travailler; tout le commerce de la ville a cessé et les artisans ont aussi cessé de travailler par suite du manque de travail. Nous cesserons aussi bientôt de respirer si le Gouvernement continue dans cette voie de persécution. Personne ne peut causer avec son ami, ni le villageois avec le bourgeois, ni l'artisan avec quelqu'un de sa corporation, et ni le bourgeois avec son voisin ou avec un autre, car, celui qui oserait le faire est de suite arrêté et soumis à un interrogatoire à n'en plus finir. On fouille les poches des hommes appartenant à toute classe, tant bourgeois que villageois, et si on trouve sur quelqu'un un couteau ou un canif, on le confisque de suite, disant que c'est un objet nuisible au Gouvernement et on le vend publiquement après quelques jours. Quelle bassesse! Et encore, on ne cesse de rapporter que la sécurité règne dans le pays en faisant signer des papiers à quelques individus, dont le nombre n'est que dix-huit seulement et que tout le monde sait bien qu'on les leur fait signer par force. Notre Sous-Gouverneur a voulu un moment fermer notre école des filles, mais plus tard il a demandé un bakchiche dont il a fixé lui-même le montant. Il faut d'abord donner un bakchiche et ensuite rapporter un cas pour obtenir une feuille d'état civil pour lequel on exige 80 ou 90 piastres, tandis que d'après la loi on ne paye que 6 ou 7 piastres seulement. Le Gouvernement Local, guidé par cet esprit de persécution incessant, ne fait qu'inventer toutes sortes de calomnies pour représenter cette paisible nation comme rebelle dont la sujétion et la fidélité depuis des siècles sont en effet plus que proverbiales. Le Sous-Gouverneur, après avoir accusé le peuple de faits imaginaires, et ne croyant pas suffisantes les sources de bakchiche qu'il s'était créées du chef de ces calomnies, s'est permis aussi de se livrer au commerce. Il a fait porter de la toile et il l'a vendue aux négociants au prix de 16 piastres la balle tandis qu'elle n'en valait que 12. Et si quelqu'un aurait fait la moindre observation contre ce commerce illicite, il était de suite accusé de révolte et conduit à Kharpourt les mains dans les menottes. Enfin il a fini par troubler la paix et le bien-être de la ville et il a placé la population dans une pénible situation.

Tandis que les voleurs se livrent à leurs déprédations durant la nuit, le Sous-Gouverneur commet ses pillages durant le jour et devant tout le monde. Il nous

a rigoureusement défendu de sortir le soir de chez nous avec ou sans lanterne, défense qui facilite aux voleurs leur action de dépouiller. Dans le cas où quelqu'un est obligé d'aller chercher une sage-femme, un prêtre, ou un médecin, il est arrêté sur le champ et mis in prison, pour n'avoir pas obéi aux ordres du Gouverneur. Ainsi, plusieurs personnes furent emprisonnés, même le prêtre lorsqu'il retournait un soir d'un mariage, après y avoir donné la bénédiction nuptiale. Cette défense est exclusivement pour les Arméniens, car les Turcs peuvent librement se promener dans la ville jusqu'au matin. Durant le jour ce sont seulement les Turcs et les soldats de la ville qui peuvent faire usage de l'eau des fontaines de la ville, et ce n'est que durant la nuit que les Arméniens peuvent arroser leur jardin.

Même alors la tyrannie existe, la patrouille vient nous rosser, nous dépouiller, et nous faire des blessures. Les gardiens de nuit font toutes sortes d'insinuations pour gagner notre confiance, et une fois qu'ils l'ont acquise, ils viennent nous voler hardiment nos biens et nos provisions, et ensuite le Gouvernement tombe sur nous et arrête des centaines d'Arméniens comme étant les auteurs de ces mêmes vols. Même durant le jour, les soldats franchissent les balustrades et les murailles pour dépouiller ce qu'ils trouvent dans la maison ou dans le jardin d'un pauvre paysan. Quelle infamie! Ceux-là sont laissés impunis, lors même que l'on s'en plaindrait. C'est très juste lorsqu'un Prince Persan avait dit se traversant un verger pendant qu'il voyageait: "Si j'oserai cueillir un citron, mes hommes seront alors capable de rendre le verger en un désert. Ainsi, lorsque le Sous-Gouverneur ou les fonctionnaires du Gouvernement qui sont responsables pour la ville placée sous leur administration se livrent au pillage et à l'usurpation des biens de la population, les simples soldats en feront naturellement d'avantage. Le grand donnera l'exemple au petit, et c'est un principe très naturel et très exact. Notre Sous-Gouverneur s'est abaissé à se faire payer 16 piastres au lieu de 12, il va sans dire que les simples soldats auront l'audace de forcer les marchands à leur donner des articles sans en demander le prix; et si ce dernier refuse de donner l'objet demandé, il risque d'être battu ou d'entendre des mots injurieux, et des paroles outrageantes. Souvent les soldats se mettent à marchander avec un boutiquier dans l'intention de voler et non pas de faire des achats, et lorsque le marchand veut les empêcher d'exécuter leur but déprédatif, ils retournent en grand nombre pour faire un assaut sur le marchand, et mieux se livrer au pillage de ses marchandises.

Plusieurs fois nous nous sommes plaints des procédés arbitraires des susdits soldats, mais aucune satisfaction ne nous a été donnée, et l'on dirait qu'on les excite ou qu'on les encourage au lieu de les punir.

Dans ces derniers jours il y a eu un incendie dans le bazar de la ville et tout le monde est allé au secours des boutiquiers, comme, d'ailleurs, c'est l'habitude chez nous. Des centaines de soldats sont aussi venus sur le lieu du sinistre, mais le Commandant, loin de prendre et dicter les mesures nécessaires pour éteindre le feu, ordonnait aux soldats de pousser les habitants au milieu des flammes, et les soldats, ayant profité de cette occasion, ne faisaient que piller ce qu'ils trouvaient sous la main. Nous ne savons pas quelle envie a poussé le Commandant Militaire qui, en grande colère, ne faisait que crier; "Fusillez ces individus," et, ayant donné le signal d'assaut, les soldats se mirent à attaquer la population avec violence, et l'épée à la main. C'était une scène des plus désolantes. Les uns échappés à cette cruauté, ont dû rentrer chez eux, les autres ont reçu des blessures après avoir perdu leur bourse, montre, chaîne, souliers, et tout.

Qu'il nous soit permis de demander un moment s'il y a unanimité à détruire la nation Arménienne, puisqu'il y a partout un esprit de persécution, de tyrannie, et de meurtre, et quelle est la cause qui amène ces fonctionnaires barbares et téméraires à commettre de pareils actes de cruauté?

La vie nous est devenue très dure si on ne met pas une fin à nos tortures. Arrivés au but de notre patience, nous avons dû recourir à la bienveillance de votre Excellence afin qu'elle veuille bien avoir pitié du sort de notre Évêque et de ceux qui se trouvent en ce moment en prison ou en exile innocemment, et d'user de sa puissante influence en vue de faire envoyer ici un fonctionnaire intègre et impartial pour ouvrir une enquête afin de découvrir les abus et les actes arbitraires susmentionnés.

Dans l'espoir que votre Excellence voudra bien accueillir favorablement notre demande, nous avons, &c.

Excellence,

Une copie de cette Pétition, signée par plus de 1,000 personnes, avait été envoyée d'ici à l'adresse de son Excellence Smeya Pacha, pour être soumise à Sa Majesté le Sultan. De même, des copies authentiques furent envoyées à leurs Excellences les Ambassadeurs de Russie, d'Allemagne, de France, et de Perse respectivement. Il est

bien probable que Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, dans ses sentiments de justice, daigne ordonner l'envoi d'une Commission d'Enquête, mais puisque les fonctionnaires qui sont au service du Gouvernement Local chercheront par tous les moyens possibles à cacher la vérité, nous prions instamment votre Excellence de vouloir bien intervenir auprès de qui de droit pour que la vérité soit découverte.

Nous certifions que la présente est une copie authentique de la Pétition signée par les membres de la communauté et envoyée au Palais et à sa Béatitude le Patriarche Arménien.

(Le Président de l'Éphorie de l'Église Cathédrale d'Arabkir),
(Signé) DER AGOPIAN.

(Le Secrétaire de l'Éphorie),
(Signé) KALBAUDIAN.
(L.S.)
(Éphorie de l'Église Cathédrale d'Arabkir).
Arabkir, le 15 (27) *Novembre*, 1891.

No. 23.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 18.)

(No. 86.) *Constantinople, March* 11, 1892.
My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that Hadji Izzet Effendi, late Vali of the Vilayet of Bussorah, has been appointed Governor-General of the Vilayet of Adana. This personage, who some years ago was appointed by Imperial Iradé Director of the Sacred Caravan, is distinguished more for his fanaticism than for any great administrative capacity.

I have also the honour to report that Faik Pasha, late Vali of the Vilayet of Moussoul, has been appointed Governor-General of the Vilayet of Costambol. His Excellency is of Arab origin, and was for some years employed as Governor of one of the districts of the Vilayet of Tripoli in Africa before being appointed to Moussoul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 24.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received March 26.)

(No. 95.) *Constantinople, March* 22, 1892.
My Lord,

IN reply to your Lordship's despatch No. 40 of the 16th February, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a telegram which I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Erzeroum, informing me that the statement contained in the "Daily News" of the 12th February, as to the number of Armenian prisoners in the Provinces of Van, Erzeroum, and Moosh awaiting trial on political charges is grossly exaggerated. Mr. Hampson states that in the Province of Van all the Armenians under arrest were released by Christmas, and that no more arrests have been reported.

In the Province of Erzeroum there are about fifty political prisoners, and several arrests reported on charges of murder.

At Moosh, as I had the honour to report in my despatch No. 90 of the 14th March, a number of Armenians, said to be as many as 250, have been arrested. Exclusive of these recent arrests, Mr. Hampson computes the number of political prisoners to be under eighty in all.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure in No. 24.

Acting Consul Hampson to Sir Clare Ford.

Erzeroum, March 21, 1892, 2 p.m.

(Telegraphic.)
YOUR Excellency's despatch of the 20th February received yesterday. Statement is a gross exaggeration.

At Moosh number of arrests lately, but no information obtainable.

In the Erzeroum Vilayet about fifty political prisoners, but no arrest since list sent last March; of those, ten released, but fifty-eight arrests for murder, reported number eight; of these, twenty-three released.

At Van all the Armenians were released by Christmas, and no more arrests are reported.

Excluding Moosh, political prisoners are probably under eighty in all.

No. 25.

Acting Consul Hampson to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, April 1.)

(No. 18.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, March* 12, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 12 of the 12th February, in which I reported the resignation of Mgr. Shishmanian, the Armenian Archbishop, I have now the honour to inform your Excellency that the Bishop of Kharput has been appointed Acting Archbishop in this district, pending the election of a new Archbishop.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 26.

Colonel Chermside to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, April 1.)

(No. 9.)
Sir, *Constantinople, March* 19, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to request your Excellency to forward, for the information of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for War, the following concerning the Hamidieh Militia Cavalry, in continuation of former Reports.

The Regulations published in the "Gazette" of the 19th October and after say the Hamidieh Militia Cavalry is to consist of regiments of Kurds, Arabs, Kurapapaks, and Turkmens.

Each regiment is to have 6 squadrons as a maximum, 4 as a minimum.

Each squadron is to have 4 sections, each with a minimum of 16 files (32 men), and a maximum of 24 files (48 men).

Squadron maximum, 192 men.
Squadron minimum, 128 men.
Regiment maximum, 1,152 men.
Regiment minimum, 512 men.

Men from different tribes are not to be mixed up.

In cases in which tribes can only furnish squadrons, these will be exercised separately in peace time, but in war time can be combined into regiments.

The rank-and-file are of 3 classes:—

1. 17 to 20 years of age, cadets or novices.
2. 20 to 30 years of age, Nizamieh, or regulars.
3. 30 to 40 years of age, Redifs.

The novice class is to be exercised for at least three months annually. The Nizamieh, besides annual manœuvres in their tribal encampments, are to be assembled by regiments at least once in three years, and to be exercised for three months.

Selected Non-Commissioned Officers are to be sent to the capital to serve two years and return as officers, also boys from the tribes who are to be trained in the cavalry school at the capital, and to return as officers.

The Redifs will be free from calls to arms except for war mobilization.

Calling out, except for drills in the tribal encampments, will be by Iradé as for the Redifs of the regular army.

Arms and ammunition will be distributed and re-collected as with the Redifs.

Troopers to provide at their own cost, horses, clothing, and equipment, the two latter in accordance with approved models based on material costumes.

A badge and the number of the regiment are to be worn.

The State provides arms and ammunition.

Novices and Nizams are bound to keep a horse fit for immediate service. The 3rd Class must do so only when the 2nd Class has been called out.

Government will furnish service of stallions to tribes who breed horses.

When the system has got into working, officers will only be appointed as above, but at first tribal leaders will be appointed as officers, and associated with regular officers.

The Mir Alais (Colonels), and Yuzbashis (Squadron Commanders), will be regular officers, Kaimakams (Lieutenant-Colonels), Bimbashis (Majors), Kol Aghaler (Adjutant-Majors), and Mulazims (Subalterns) will be tribesmen.

The Ferik (Divisional-General) and Livas (Brigadier-Generals) will be regulars.

Tribal Chiefs of proved service, and capable of acting as Mir Alai, can be so appointed by Irade.

Tribal officers after three years' service with the regulars, will, if they have gained certificates, be always on full pay.

All ranks have right to full pay and rations, when assembled beyond their encampments. When drilling near their homes, Chiefs and officers are to receive ½ pay only, and troopers a gratuity. When the regiment is not under arms the officers appointed from tribal Notables get ½ pay but no ration.

Discipline is to be maintained according to the military code and independently of tribal customs.

Crimes to be dealt with according to the Redif Regulations.

Officers and men of Hamidieh regiments are free from all taxes except sheep tax and tithe, and are exempt from liability to military requisitions or forced labour.

Men not belonging to these regiments are liable to conscription for the regular army.

There is an idea of adding later two guns to each regiment. Some brass rifled mountain guns have lately been sent to Trebizond.

Hitherto the matter has only been proceeded with in the IVth Ordu district, and the results so far obtained are largely due to the action of the energetic Circassian Commandant of the Ordu, Mushir Mohammed Leki Pasha. I append a list of regiments reported to be actually formed.

"Hamidé" Kurdish Cavalry List of Thirty Regiments.

Name of Regiment.	Tribe.	Chief.
1	Sipiki	Sheradin Agha Zadé Hussein Aghá.
2	Ditto	Ali Tocin Agha Zadé Hussein Bey.
3	Ditto	Hadji Youssuf Posha.
4	Zilanlu	Salim Pasha.
5	Ditto	Ayub Pasha.
6	Karo-papak Seraglu ..	Ali Agha.
7	Ditto	Tajdan Agha.
8	Haidaranlu	Hussein Pasha and brother, Sultan.
9	Ditto	Emin Pasha and brother.
10	Djamadanlu	Mahmoud Agha Zadé Hussein Bey.
11	Adamanlu	Mirza Agha.
12	Ditto	Ditto.
13	Haidaranlu	Hadji Temour Pasha.
14	Ditto	Ali Agha.
15	Ditto	Mohamed Sédik.
16	Moukri	Ibrahim Agha.
17	Shevi	Hadji Mirza Agha.
18	Shemski	Sadoun Agha.
19	Shekefti	Sherif Agha.
20	Hassananlu	Faraha Agha.
21	Ditto	Taje-el-din Agha.
22	Ditto	Youssuf Egid Agha.
23	Ditto	Ayas Agha.
24	Zivikanlu	Mustapha Agha.
25	Djibranlu	Mahmoud Effendi.
26	Ditto	Ayub Agha.
27	Ditto	Dervish Agha.
28	Kiskanlu	Reshid Bey.
29	Adamanlu	Ali Agha.
30	Lalanlu	Koali Kan Agha.

Numbers of regiments are approximately added.

The formation of additional regiments in the IVth Ordu district is to be continued in the spring. Temani-Zadeh, Pasha of the Milli tribe, will furnish two regiments, the Miran Kurds, under Mustafa Pasha, one regiment.

Ferik Ismail Hakki Pasha is the General commanding the Division. On his Staff are Bimbashis Mahmud and Zakaria Effendis, Sagh Kol Aghassi Bedri Bey, and Yuzbashi Mehmed Fehmi Bey.

In 1889 the application of the measure was extended in the VIth Ordu, to the Kurdish and other tribes, as owing to the few Christians in that district, it was considered that there were fewer chances of complications or of opposition by foreign Powers. Owing, however, to the remonstrances of the Persian Government the measure was dropped. It is stated that Mushir Rejeb Pasha, Officer commanding VIth Ordu, has now been commissioned to raise Hamidieh regiments among the Arab tribes of the VIth Ordu district.

The total number of regiments to be raised is not specified in the Règlement, but it is reported from other sources to be 48 in the IVth Ordu, irrespective of those in the VIth.

This number would appear to be excessive, and to militate against the success of the project.

In the Anatolian theatre of war, owing to sparseness of population, scanty supplies and want of any but district paths as communications, there is not scope for a vast number of irregular light horse, excess of which would only embarrass and impede Commanders.

There is also the danger of the force becoming an ill-disciplined uncontrollable militia, instead of a serviceable division of scouts and guides.

There is further the consideration of the great number of men withdrawn from the conscription even in theory; in practice these tribes will probably furnish no recruits to the regular army.

Judging from the non-application of the training Regulations prescribed for the active and Redif reserves, there is considerable chance of the same in the present case.

Funds are little likely to be forthcoming for the manœuvres, and there are many difficulties as to the execution of the encampment drills by the scattered nomad pastoral communities.

Some remarks received by me in private letters on the subject are of interest. "The village Kurds do not like the auxiliary cavalry regiment business at all. They say the Aghas, in rivalry of one another, have pressed them very hard, registering everything in the shape of a man even if 100 years old, and that for instance they compel a poor Kurd to sell his cow and buy a horse. The Armenians are as little content as might be expected, though there is nothing unusually bad."

The horses have been branded.

Another correspondence bears out the above as to scarcity of men with their own horses, it gives—

	Mounted Men.	Unmounted Men.
18th Regiment	393	207
19th ,, ...	327	213
20th ,, ...	310	200
? ,, ...	304	280
22nd ,, ...	335	205
21st ,, ...	310	230
23rd ,, ...	308	232
? ,, ...	309	195

Another account of enrolment gives "Abagha Plain, 600 men, near Serai, Takuri and Makuri, 800; Sor Albak (Shikiak), 250 men, Berghri, Arjish, El-jivaz, 1,200, all mounted, the horses branded; this does not include footmen. It is a pity that civil and military interests must clash."

Another correspondent:—

"It is my firm belief that when it comes to really producing the regiments there will be nothing like what appears on paper; this of course is only an opinion founded on rumours and stories."

I have, &c.

(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE, *Colonel.*

No. 27.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 1.)

(No. 100.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March 24, 1892.*

IMMEDIATELY upon the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 50 of the 27th ultimo, requesting me to ascertain and report the result of the proceedings taken against the Bishop of Zeitoun and other Armenian prisoners, arrested on charges of sedition, I instructed Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo to furnish me with a full report on the present phase of this case.

I have now the honour to inclose copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Consul Jago reporting that the trial, having been frequently adjourned is not yet over, but that since the prisoners have been ordered to prepare their defence, the result of the trial may soon be expected.

Mr. Jago further reports upon the absence of any evidence against the prisoners, and the heavy expense entailed by the trial upon the Armenian community of the town of Marash.

I shall not fail to report to your Lordship any further information which I may receive upon the issue of this trial.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure in No. 27.

Consul Jago to Sir Clare Ford.

Sir, *Aleppo, March 10, 1892.*

IN reply to your Excellency's telegram of yesterday respecting the Bishop and other Armenian prisoners of Zeitoun, now numbering forty-eight in all, I have the honour to state that the trial is not yet over, it having been adjourned on various pretexts from time to time. Last week, however, they were ordered to prepare their defence, so that the result may perhaps shortly be expected.

None of the numerous witnesses called by the prosecution testified against them in any way, with the exception of a gendarme who, after much pressure by the Court, recognized one of the prisoners, a young peasant, as having seen him in possession of a gun.

It seems impossible for the authorities to produce any evidence against the prisoners.

Lately, five rich Armenians of Marash have been brought here, accused of the offence (not crime) of meeting in secret council, with others at Marash, concerning the Zeitoun affair at the time of the disturbances, and signing a Petition conjointly with Protestant and Catholic Armenians to the Government. After examination and long detention they have been liberated on bail, and have returned to Marash, having paid large sums to various head officials here.

Last week eighteen other Marash Armenians were cited on the same charge, and are expected here soon; but the result, in all probability, will be the same.

It is understood that the object of the judicial authorities is to fish for evidence against the Zeitoun prisoners, but none, I believe, will be forthcoming, either against the one or the other. The Marash prosecution has already cost the rich Armenians of that town about 800*l.*, and it is calculated that with the eighteen now expected the sum of 2,000*l.* will be reached and encashed by the head officials at Aleppo over this matter.

The Zeitoun prisoners, with the exception of the Bishop and one or two others, are persons of low degree—peasants, cobblers, and muleteers—and they are all, without exception, devoid of the necessary means of influencing the course of justice. They have now been in prison sixteen months, without sentence, and have made reiterated appeals to the clemency of the Sultan, which remain without response.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. S. JAGO.

No. 28.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 78.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, April 4, 1892.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 100 of the 24th ultimo, respecting the proceedings against the Bishop of Zeitoun and other Armenian prisoners of that place, who were arrested on charges of sedition at the end of 1890, and brought to Aleppo for trial in March 1891.

The case was represented to the Grand Vizier as long ago as January of last year by Sir A. Sandison, as reported by Sir W. White in his despatch No. 39 of the 31st January, 1891.

On that occasion his Highness informed Sir A. Sandison that there was more against the Bishop than was supposed, and that as the interrogatory was still going on, he would wait until it was concluded.

It appears, however, from Mr. Consul Jago's Report, inclosed in your despatch under reply, that the trial is not yet over, as it has been adjourned on various pretexts from time to time, and that although the prosecution have called numerous witnesses, no evidence implicating the Bishop and his fellow prisoners has been forthcoming.

Under these circumstances, I shall be glad if your Excellency will call the special attention of the Grand Vizier to the great hardship and injustice inflicted on the accused by these protracted proceedings, and urge the adoption of the necessary steps for bringing them to a prompt conclusion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 29.

Acting Consul Hampson to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, April 15.)

(No. 19.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, March 26, 1892.*

ON Sunday last I had the honour to receive your Excellency's despatch of the 29th February, and, in compliance with the instructions contained therein, I sent you a cypher telegram to the effect that the statement made by the "Daily News" as to 700 Armenians being in prison on political charges, was a gross exaggeration. I stated that probably, exclusive of the recent arrests at Moosh, there were not eighty Armenians in prison on political charges throughout this Consular district, and I believe that in so stating I allow a liberal margin.

In spite of continual endeavours, I have been unable to obtain any further information regarding the arrests at Moosh, which I reported in my No. 17 of the 5th instant. I have, however, written to Mr. Fitzmaurice, requesting him to try and obtain particulars as to Armenian prisoners at Moosh and Bitlis, as well as at Van itself. As to the latter place, Mr. Devey, when he passed through Erzeroum before Christmas, informed me that all Armenians in prison on political charges had been released, and no fresh arrests have been since reported.

In regard to the Erzeroum vilayet, I believe I am justified in stating that not a single Armenian has been arrested on anything approaching a political charge since I forwarded a list of prisoners in my No. 28 of the 21st March, 1891, although travellers have sometimes been detained for a few days. The only possible exception that has come to my knowledge is the arrest of fifty-eight Armenians from the Narman district, reported in my despatches No. 116 of the 26th December, 1891, and No. 8 of the 16th January, 1892, and these can hardly be considered as political prisoners, the charge against them being the murder of four Turks in revenge for the murder of three Armenians in the previous year. Moreover, twenty-three of these have since been released. On the other hand, ten of the prisoners mentioned in the list referred to have since been released.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 30.

Mr. Townley to the Foreign Office.—(Received April 22.)

Sir, *Fulbourn Manor, Cambridge, April 22, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith a statement of the information which I have been able to gather during a recent journey from Tehran to the Mediterranean by way of Bushire and Bagdad, and which I have thought it my duty to communicate to you.

Should a detailed Report of the road from Bagdad to Aleppo, viâ Mosul and Diarbekr, which has been very little visited by European travellers of late years, be required, I can furnish one if instructed to do so, as I have taken careful notes, as fully as it was possible for me to do during my rapid passage through that part of Asiatic Turkey.

I may add that I have forwarded a detailed account of all matters concerning Persian and Turco-Persian affairs to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY

Inclosure in No. 30.

Report of a Journey from Tehran to Alexandretta, by way of Ispahan, Shiraz, Bushire, Bussorah, Bagdad, Mosul, Mardin, Diarbekr, and Aleppo.

THE road from Tehran to the Persian Gulf is so well known that it would be superfluous for me to say anything about that part of my journey beyond mentioning that of late a decided feeling of hostility towards Europeans has made itself felt at Shiraz, where European inhabitants, who had formerly been accustomed to walk about the streets and the bazaars of the town without being subjected to the slightest inconvenience, informed me that of late their passage through the streets has been the signal for cries, which in themselves are quite harmless, though intended to be taunts, but which denote that the European is no longer treated with the same respect as heretofore.

It is agreed on all hands that the Mollahs, who have of late become most overbearing and fanatical, are at the bottom of this very unsatisfactory state of affairs, which, when I was at Shiraz (17th to 20th February) had reached such a pitch as to threaten shortly to become a cause of real difficulty unless prompt measures were taken to place the position of Europeans in that town on a more satisfactory footing. Indeed, some of the members of the Government Telegraph Staff told me that their position promised soon to become almost intolerable, and such that they would not be able to leave their houses.

I had the honour to inform Sir Frank Lascelles of the hostile feeling at Shiraz by letter from that town; and I also informed him that this movement was directed against all Europeans in general, and not especially against British subjects, as was shown by the fact that on the 19th February a mob broke into a house occupied by some Russian rope dancers and destroyed all their property.

Messrs. Lynch intend to run their river-steamer, the "Blosse Lynch," on the Karun, from Muhammerah to Shushter, during the summer months, as was done last year. I met the officer who commanded the "Blosse Lynch" last summer on one of the firm's river-steamers on which I made the journey from Bussorah to Bagdad, and he told me that the trade done last year had been very small. Indeed, it is not expected that the trade on the Karun can be more than what is sufficient to meet the requirements of the few towns and the country district immediately adjacent to the river until the Tehran-Shuster road has been completed, when it is hoped that an enormous increase in the trade by this route will take place.

As regards the questions at issue between Messrs. Lynch's firm and the local authorities concerning matters connected with the administration of the internal affairs of the Karun River and district, I was told by people thoroughly conversant with the question that things were now looking much brighter, and that it now really seemed as if the greater part of the petty obstacles which had been continually put in the Company's way had been removed, and that headway was being slowly but surely made.

The local authorities in the neighbourhood of Khoreinabad are also reported to have taken strong measures, which they have every intention of carrying through until complete order is established, to coerce the refractory and predatory tribes which infest the district through which the Tehran-Shuster road will pass. This energetic action on the part of the local Governors will render the task of the Road Company much less hazardous and arduous, unless it should prove to be only a momentary flush of energy taken with a view of displaying great zeal just before the Persian New Year's Day (21st March), on which date it is customary to make changes among the local Governors.

Several British merchants and British-protected merchants represented to me, at Bagdad and elsewhere, that their mercantile transactions had been rendered much more difficult by the temporary loss of British prestige in Persia, consequent upon the failure of the Tobacco Régie, and I was urged to represent to the Legation at Tehran how very essential it is that the Tehran-Shushter road should be brought to as speedy a completion as possible, not only on account of the very great addition to direct British trade with Persia, which it is maintained must result therefrom, but also in order that confidence in British undertakings and enterprises may be restored.

The chief topic of conversation along the road from Bagdad to Diarbekr was the recent massing of Turkish troops in the Bagdad district towards the Persian frontier. Various rumours were afloat, and the statements regarding the numbers of the troops which had been sent towards Bagdad did not always tally, and were doubtless in many cases much exaggerated, but the fact cannot be disputed that large bodies of troops have been directed towards the Province of Bagdad for service on the frontier, and that, moreover, their real destination and object has been kept carefully concealed.

The general belief seemed to be that these troops were to be employed to patrol the Turco-Persian frontier, to prevent Mahmood Pasha, Aka-i-Jaf, from crossing over into Persia. It also seemed generally granted that should this Chieftain have already crossed the Persian frontier a strong demonstration would be made by the Turkish troops on the frontier, so as to intimidate the Persian Government and force them to deliver him up to the Turkish authorities.

Mahmoud Pasha was said to be at the head of 40,000 Kurdish cavalry (at least one-half of this number may probably exist only in imagination), and some reports had it that he was still on Turkish soil, whereas others maintained that he had already taken refuge in Persian territory.

Other surmises were that this unusual assemblage of troops had been made in anticipation of possible difficulties which might arise between the Turkish and Persian Governments in connection with the establishment of the monopoly for the export of Persian tobacco into Turkey by the "Société des Tombacs;" or that a movement was to be made on the frontier in view of the very serious disturbances which have of late years taken place at Zohab and other places on the Turco-Persian frontier, the proprietorship of which has never been clearly defined by Treaty, and which, pending further settlement, are not to be tilled by the subjects of either State. From the information which I was able to collect it would appear that these disturbances are much more serious than is generally understood, and that there is, in consequence of frontier and tribal disputes, a very considerable annual loss of life.

When I was at Bushire and Bagdad there was also a report current that Turkey had some fresh designs upon the Island of Bahrein, and it was thought that these movements of troops might be in connection with that; but such large numbers of troops as are reported to have been collected in the Province of Bagdad would hardly have been necessary for this purpose had Turkey any such design.

In spite of the fact that there is a small detachment of four or five mounted police ("zaptiehs") at all the post stations between Bagdad and Aleppo (with larger bodies numbering 100 men at some of the more important places and at spots on the road where the presence of marauding tribes is a source of danger to travellers), whose special duty it is to accompany the post from one station to another, the road is far from safe in many parts, more especially between the village of Deli Abbas, which is the Frontier village of the Bagdad Province, and the town of Kerkûk, and it is quite essential for travellers to be accompanied by an escort of one or more mounted policemen.

The following incident will serve to show how little the lawless nomad tribes are under control in these parts, even upon a high road where there is such a regular succession of police guards:—

On each side of the village of Khanemahin, about 36 miles north-west of Sulaimiyeh or Kifrie, was encamped, when I passed by on the 17th March last, a

nomad tribe called the Dáddeh. In consequence of some misdemeanours three or four members of this tribe had been imprisoned by the local authorities in the village of Khourmakhtu, and the night before I arrived there, *i.e.*, the 16th March, 200 mounted tribesmen had surrounded the village and fired several volleys into it (the inhabitants declared that at least 1,000 shots had been fired), killing one man and wounding two others, one of them so severely that his life was despaired of. On the 18th, while I was on my way to Tukúk, the next station, I met a military officer accompanied by a force of near upon 200 mounted policemen, who were on their way to Khourmakhtu to inquire into the causes of the disturbance and to punish, if he found himself strong enough to do so, the offenders. The only further information that I could gather with regard to this episode was that I was told at Mosul that telegraphic communication had been interrupted.

From Kerkúk on to Aleppo the road is, comparatively speaking, safe, though I was requested to take a police guard with me at several places as a precautionary measure, though I could not gather, from information which I was able to collect from local sources, that there was any real danger, except perhaps between Mardin and Diarbekr and in the immediate neighbourhood of Aleppo, though I believe that in the latter case it is more the remembrance of dangers which used to exist than any recent instances of highway robbery which causes this feeling of uneasiness.

The country traversed between Bagdad and Diarbekr is most extraordinarily fertile, the soil is very rich, and wherever it has not been tilled it affords magnificent pasture on which large flocks of sheep, cattle, and mares graze. Wherever the soil had been tilled there were splendid crops, and it was evident that, should at any time a slight additional impetus be given to agriculture in these parts, a very great future lies before this district, of which the resources appear unlimited, there being apparently an abundance of water all the year round.

So fertile is this district, and so many places of considerable importance, such as Mardin, Mosul, Arville (ancient Arbela), Kerkúk, Alton Kupri, Salahiyeh, or Kifrie, &c., are included in it, that I cannot help thinking that it is most probable that this route, or at least one in this direction which will, after leaving Mosul, follow the course of the Tigris more directly south to Bagdad, will eventually be chosen for the railway to Bagdad, which it is commonly reported will be made in the course of a few years. The configuration of the country presents no serious difficulty to such an enterprise. The country to be traversed is for the most part almost a dead level, except that it becomes rather undulating after leaving Alton-Kupri, going north, and there are only two or three very insignificant chains of hills to be crossed. The only difficulty would lie in the fact that the rapid current of the Tigris, and one or two other not inconsiderable streams, would have to be bridged in several places, which would be easily done by experienced European engineers, although it appears from the total absence of modern bridges of any sort (ruins of ancient ones exist), with the exception of a very handsome, but quite useless, one at Mosul, that engineering art in Turkey has not yet reached a sufficiently high pitch to cope with these difficulties.

I was told that several engineers (German and Belgian ones as far as I could understand) have already surveyed the road which would look as if one of the two Companies which have the lines in Northern Asia Minor from the Black Sea, the one to Siwas and the other to Angorah, each with the faculty of extending its line to Diarbekr, would, in course of time, carry on its extension to Bagdad by this route, which has this very considerable advantage over the Euphrates Valley route that, whereas the latter's sole *raison d'être* would be that it would become an alternative transit route to Bagdad and India, this railway would tap one of, perhaps, the most fertile regions in the known world which is still capable of enormous improvement as soon as go-ahead European enterprises give an impetus to the naturally indolent natives, who are quite content to extract only sufficient for their own immediate wants from the country they inhabit.

Further, the passage of the Beilan Mountains from Alexandretta would present very great, though, doubtless, not insurmountable difficulties, which it would require all the skill of modern engineering to overcome, whereas I was told at Diarbekr that the country which would have to be crossed in the event of a railway being made from Siwas to that town would present no serious obstacle to the construction of such a line.

It is a significant fact, and one that points to the probability of some measures being shortly taken to make more capital out of the natural resources of the Province of Bagdad, that the Sultan has himself of late years been buying land very largely in that district.

I do not know if there are insuperable difficulties in the way of the construction of a railway from Adana or some port on the shore of the Mediterranean to Diarbekr, but if such a work could be carried out it would make the distance to be traversed from the sea to Bagdad much less than that which would have to be covered from the Black Sea to that town, and the country through which the line would pass is so extraordinarily fertile—at least from Diarbekr on—that I cannot help thinking that the undertaking would prove a most remunerative one, and it would, moreover, in the hands of an English Company, give England a hold over the transit trade to the Persian Gulf and Southern Persia which might prove invaluable in the event of a hostile movement being made on Persia by Russia.

(Signed) WALTER TOWNLEY.

Fulbourn Manor, Cambridge, April 22, 1892.

No. 31.

Mr. Fitzmaurice to Acting Consul Hampson.—(Received at the Foreign Office, April 29.)

(No. 1.)

Sir, *Van, March* 31, 1892.

THE Russian Government has lately made two announcements with regard to its policy in Russo-Armenia having on the Armenian population of this district a certain effect which, I think, ought not to be let pass unnoticed.

The first was a notification on the part of the Russian Government to the Armenian Ecclesiastical authorities at Etchmiazin that some ecclesiastics should proceed to St. Petersburgh to confer with the Russian Ecclesiastical authorities on the differences between the Russian Orthodox and the Armenian Churches, with a view to removing such differences and uniting the two Churches. As the Armenian Church is intimately bound up with the spirit of Armenian nationality, this attempt on the part of the Russian Government to denationalize their Church is regarded with much dishavour, and even dismay, by the Armenians.

The second is a report published in the Armenian paper "Aravelk," and reproduced by the Turkish press, to the effect that, after the election of the "Katoghikoss" in May, the Russian Government will propose for his acceptance a new Regulation of three Articles:—

1. That in the Armenian schools all instruction, with the exception of religious instruction, shall be given in the Russian language, and that Armenian shall be taught like any other foreign language (*e.g.*, French, German, &c.).

2. That the religious books in the hands of Armenian students in Russian schools shall be in Russian, and the religious instructor shall impart such instruction through the medium of the Russian language.

3. That the landed property belonging to Etchmiazin and other Armenian churches and monasteries shall be bought over by the Russian Government at a price to be fixed by it, the revenues of such lands being deposited in a State Bank. From this fund the Russian Government will pay fixed salaries to the Armenian clergy, the "Katoghikoss" no longer interfering in these financial matters.

All of these rumoured attempts of the Russian Government to denationalize and Russify the Armenians in Russia have produced a strong anti-Russian feeling among Turkish Armenians here, who see that, whatever may be their complaints against the Turkish Government, they enjoy greater freedom on the score of religion and language in the Ottoman than in the Russian Empire.

The semi-sequestration of Armenian church lands, and the reducing of the Armenian clergy to the position of salaried servants of the Russian Government, is likely to meet with strenuous opposition on the part of both Armenian priests and people. They will not be glad to see the Head of their Church stripped of these revenues, with their attendant influence, and rendered financially dependent on the Russian Government.

All these questions lend an additional interest to the election in May of the successor to "Katoghikoss" Magar.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

No. 32.

Mr. Fitzmaurice to Acting Consul Hampson.—(Received at the Foreign Office, April 29.)

(No. 2.)

Van, March 31, 1892.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report the arrival at Van of Bahri Pasha, the new Vali, and the departure by way of Bitlis of his predecessor, Khalil Bey. The new Vali, who is a "Ferik," was for six years and a-half commander of the troops in Scutari (Albania), during the last three years and a-half of which period he also held the rank of Vali. Both at Scutari and at Bitlis, where he was employed in a military capacity, he has left behind him a record of integrity and straightforward honesty. He is a pure soldier, and seems determined to act irrespective of party, thereby avoiding the great fault of Khalil Bey, who governed by setting one party against another. He seems thoroughly alive to the necessity for facilities of communication in the vilayet, especially the construction of the strategic route from the Van to Bitlis.

He is showing a considerable amount of energy in trying to introduce order and regularity into the administrative routine of the vilayet, and the collection of taxes.

The appointment of a military Governor-General seems owing in great measure to the additional importance from a military standpoint of this vilayet in view of the recent formation of the Kurdish cavalry regiments.

In this connection I may mention the rumoured forthcoming visit this spring of the Mushir of the 4th Army Corps to the southern districts of this and the neighbouring Vilayets of Bitlis and Diarbekir to complete the enrolment of the Kurds inhabiting those parts.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

No. 33.

Acting Consul Hampson to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, April 29.)

(No. 21.)

Erzeroum, April 9, 1892.

Sir,

WITH reference to my No. 19 of the 26th March, and previous despatches respecting the arrest at Moosh of a large number of Armenians charged with seditious practices, I have now the honour to inform your Excellency that a few days ago thirteen Armenians, accused of treasonable conduct, were brought here in irons from Moosh, and that many more prisoners, about 150, it is said, are expected here shortly in connection with the same accusation.

So far I have been unable to obtain any further details, but I hope soon to receive information from Mr. Fitzmaurice on the subject.

Two Armenian prisoners, charged with sedition, have also recently been brought in here from the Ispir district.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

P.S.—I learn that thirty-two more prisoners from Bitlis have just been brought in here, and that the whole number are to proceed at once to Trebizond, on their way to Constantinople.

Eleven Armenians from Kurichai, including a priest, have also been sent under arrest to Erzingian.

C. S. H.

No. 34.

Acting Consul Hampson to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, April 29.)

(No. 22.)

Erzeroum, April 16, 1892.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 21 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the Armenian prisoners who had been brought here on a

charge of sedition from the districts of Moosh and Bitlis, and who, I now learn, were thirty-five in number in all, left last Saturday, with a large escort, for Trebizond. It was announced that they were going to Constantinople, but it is said, on what grounds I have been unable to ascertain, that sentence of exile had been already pronounced against them, and that they would be sent direct to Sinope or Aere. Great precautions were taken, while on the road and here, to prevent them from communicating with any one.

Among them were three priests and a store-keeper of the Tobacco Régie. The charge against them was of conspiring against His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, and, more particularly, I understand, of preparing Petitions to the Russian Government.

From the little that I can learn there is small doubt of their guilt. It is, therefore, the more to be regretted that the proceedings in regard to them have not been conducted in a more open and formal manner. The result of the secrecy maintained throughout the business is to give a pretext to those who say that they have been unjustly condemned, and to annul the deterrent effect of a public and indisputable conviction.

I hear that many more prisoners, on the same charge, will shortly be brought here from the same districts.

Meanwhile, everything is perfectly quiet round this part.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 35.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received April 29.)

(No. 135.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, April 23, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to report that Kadri Bey, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Finance, has been appointed Governor-General of the Vilayet of Trebizond.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 36.

Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Acting Consul Hampson.—(Received at the Foreign Office May 13.)

Sir,

Van, April 9, 1892.

IN my despatch of the 31st March of this year I referred to the rumoured forthcoming visit this spring of the Mushir of the 4th Army Corps to the southern districts of this and the neighbouring Vilayets of Bitlis and Diarbekir. I have now been informed that this is a fact.

Accompanied by Hamdi Pasha, the former Commandant of the regulars in this vilayet, the Mushir, Zeki Pasha, will proceed by Bitlis to Diarbekir and Mosul, reaching Van by the Hekkiari. His object is to enrol the Kurdish tribes in those districts, as also to confer about the opening of schools in some of the principal Kurdish villages.

For the latter object I am informed by the Ma'arif Mudir (the Director of Public Instruction) of this vilayet that the sum of £T. 8,000 has been set apart by the Minister of Public Instruction to be divided equally between Erzeroum Vilayet and Van Vilayet.

There can be no doubt that if this sum be honestly applied it will have a far-reaching result in bringing the Kurds into closer contact with the semi-civilization of these parts.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

No. 37.

Acting Consul Hampson to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office May 13.)

Sir, *Erzeroum, April 23, 1892.*

WITH reference to my despatches No. 19 of the 26th March and No. 22 of the 16th instant respecting Armenian political prisoners, I have now the honour to inclose copy in duplicate of a despatch received from Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice, giving information in regard to prisoners at Van, Moosh, and Bitlis, and some further particulars as to the recent arrests in the latter districts.

Your Excellency will perceive that, in general, Mr. Fitzmaurice confirms the information sent by me last week to the effect that there is no doubt of the guilt of the prisoners from Moosh and Bitlis, and that twenty-four of them have been exiled to Acre. These twenty-four, together with the eleven from Erzingian, as reported in my No. 19, are the thirty-five who left here a fortnight ago.

Mr. Fitzmaurice states that, in addition, four of the prisoners have been condemned to death, and three to three years' hard labour. Of these facts I was not aware.

From Mr. Fitzmaurice's despatch it appears that the report that many more prisoners were coming from Bitlis is not correct.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

P.S.—Since writing the above, five more Armenian prisoners have arrived here from Moosh, and proceeded at once to Trebizonde.

C. S. H.

Inclosure in No. 37.

Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Acting Consul Hampson.

Sir, *Van, April 13, 1892.*

I BEG to acknowledge receipt of your despatch of the 21st March, 1892, making inquiries as to the number of Armenian political prisons in this vilayet and Bitlis.

In Van there are five. In Mush, I am informed, there are none. In Bitlis there are from thirty-one to thirty-five.

Thirty-one of these Bitlis Armenian prisoners have been transferred to Bitlis from Mush, where, with some thirty others (some sixty in all), they were arrested in January last on account of treasonable documents found on some of the professors of the Armenian Normal School at Mush. Thirty were at once released after the preliminary interrogatory; sentence has lately been passed on the thirty-one at Bitlis, of whom twenty-four have been exiled to Acre; three have been condemned to three years' hard labour, and four to death.

Impartial Armenians at Bitlis have acknowledged the guilt of these prisoners, but I have been unable to learn whether their crime has been serious enough to justify such severe penalties.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

No. 38.

Acting Consul Hampson to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office May 13.)

(No. 25.)

Sir, *Erzeroum, April 23, 1892.*

I HAVE on several occasions had the pleasure of bringing to the notice of Her Majesty's Embassy the energy, justice, and determination to maintain order shown by his Excellency Hassan Hairi Pasha, Vali of Erzeroum.

I have now the honour to report to your Excellency another instance of these qualities, which, though small in itself, has, owing to its nature, been brought more especially under my observation.

About a month ago the house of the Dragoman of the Consulate was broken into one night, in his absence, by six armed men, who threatened his wife and

daughter, even slightly wounding the former, and carried off all portable valuables, arms, jewellery, money, &c.

On my bringing the matter personally to the notice of the Vali, his Excellency begged me to leave it entirely in his hands, assuring me that the property should be recovered and the offenders punished.

I have now the satisfaction to report that this promise has been literally executed. In spite of many difficulties in tracing the robbers, they (Turks) are now all in prison, and the stolen property, which had been dispersed in various villages around the town, has all been recovered and restored to its owner.

Having in view the frequent accusations of lawlessness and want of security which are made against these provinces, I think it only just to bring to your Excellency's notice this proof of what can be accomplished by an energetic and upright Governor.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 39.

Acting Consul Hampson to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office May 13.)

(No. 26.)

Sir, *Erzeroum, April 30, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to forward copy, in duplicate, of a despatch received from Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice, reporting the arrest of two prominent Armenians at Van.

It is to be hoped that this step may tend to deter other Armenians from taking part in such treacherous and disgraceful intrigues as those with which these men appear to have been connected, and of which, I fear, only too many exist among the Armenians.

I hear very favourable reports of the energy which Bahri Pasha is showing as Vali of Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

Inclosure in No. 39.

Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Acting Consul Hampson.

Sir, *Van, April 17, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to report the arrest and imprisonment here of Natanian Garabed Effendi, the most prominent Armenian in Van during the time of the late Vali, Khalil Bey, and also of Avedis Effendi Bartevian, Second Commissaire of Police, and another favourite of the former Vali.

Natanian Garabed Effendi, chief of one of the local factions, had once been exiled, but succeeded in procuring his own recall to Van. He acquired a great influence over Khalil Bey—an influence which he used to the detriment of the population of this vilayet. He used his power to wreak vengeance on the leaders of the opposite faction, who had been instrumental in bringing about his exile, and pursued his ends utterly regardless of the interests of the community at large or the Armenian community in particular.

It would appear that he and Avedis Effendi have been arrested in pursuance of orders from Constantinople, where have come to light certain intrigues in which both engaged, and by which they pretended to discover Armenian Secret Societies, and brought forward trumped-up charges of Armenian conspiracies, with a view to increasing at Constantinople the influence and reputation for zeal of their protector, Khalil Bey.

As it is now Ramazan, no further proceedings have been taken against them, and after Bairam I shall not fail to watch and report on the case.

In the same connection I may mention the rumoured return to Van of Derboghosian Ohannes Effendi Keshish Oglou, banished to Constantinople last year (*vide* Mr. Devey's No. 24 of the 28th July, 1891), through the intrigues, as generally believed, of his rival, Natanian Garabed Effendi.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

No. 40.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 149.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May 7, 1892.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 100 of the 24th March, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo reporting the conclusion of the trial of the Bishop of Zeitoun and other Armenian political prisoners.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure in No. 40.

Consul Jago to Sir Clare Ford.

Sir, *Aleppo, April 19, 1892.*

REFERRING to my despatch of the 10th ultimo on the subject of the Zeitoun prisoners, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that the trial ended on the 16th instant, when twenty-two out of the forty-eight accused persons in the Aleppo prisons were acquitted by the Court of Appeal here, and the remainder, viz., twenty-six, found guilty. Among these twenty-six are the Bishop of Zeitoun, a school teacher and a preacher, the rest being illiterate persons of low degree. Besides these, fourteen fugitives were tried by default, of whom three were acquitted and the remainder found guilty. Sentence will be passed on or about the 23rd instant.

Three of those found guilty will probably be condemned to death. They are peasants, muleteers, &c. The sentences on the others will range between three and fifteen years. That on the Bishop who was found guilty of failing to warn the Government of the existence of a conspiracy, although well cognizant of it, will probably be five or six years' imprisonment.

On sentence being passed, appeal will be made to Constantinople. No witnesses were allowed to be called for the defence.

Twenty-two witnesses, five Moslems and seventeen Armenians, who had previously given their evidence before the Special Commission of Marash, were produced for corroboration of their testimony, when all without exception asserted their alleged evidence to be inaccurate in the most important particulars, and instead of being eye-witnesses to facts as stated in the Minutes of the Commission, they only knew of them by hearsay. For instance, the Bishop was charged on the alleged evidence of the President of the Zeitoun Municipality of constructing, contiguous to his monastery, a building for the purposes of rebellion. The President of the Municipality, however, confirmed the statement of the Bishop that the building was simply the reconstruction of a few guest chambers which had fallen into ruin, and that they were restored and rebuilt with the full cognizance and permission of the Municipality. Again, one Buchak Serkis, an Armenian of Zeitoun, the principal witness for the prosecution to prove the connivance of the Bishop and others of the accused in the events which led to the disturbances, and whose evidence, as taken by the Marash Commission, was very strong, appeared and solemnly declared his alleged evidence to be absolutely false and fabricated by the Commission.

He complained also of ill-treatment and severe beating by the soldiers, and of having been imprisoned fifteen days in Marash.

He was sent to prison by the President of the Appeal Court as a liar, and, although again brought up, declined to alter his statement. He is still in prison.

No evidence incriminating any person for the murder of the gendarme at Zeitoun was produced, the authors of the crime apparently remaining unknown. As regards the firing on the troops at Zeitoun, the Bishop declared that while he and others were proceeding, at the request of Salib Pasha, the Governor of Marash then on the spot, from the Convent of Zeitoun to the Bozbaïer church in the town, in order to prevail upon the "robbers" to surrender, the troops opened fire upon the church, and the robbers, fearing their destruction was intended, replied.

The defence of the Bishop and others was chiefly based upon the assertion that the disturbances were created and fomented purposely by the Governor of Marash, who, knowing that his predecessor, Edhé Pasha, had received the rank of Begler Bey for his amicable adjustment of an alleged incipient rebellion at Zeitoun about eight years ago, craved the same distinction, and, in order to obtain it, began a system of

persecution against the so-called robbers of Zeitoun and others of the inhabitants to excite their fears and provoke retaliation, never, however, expecting that matters would assume the serious aspect they afterwards did. The Bishop called attention to the repeated warnings he had addressed to the authorities at Aleppo and Constantinople of the inevitable consequences which would result if Salib Pasha's conduct in this respect was allowed to continue. In corroboration of the preconceived hostility of Salib Pasha against the Zeitoun people, the accused asserted, moreover, that during the summer preceding the disturbances (1890) he purposely sent into their districts a Government (Armenian) doctor on a vaccination tour armed with impure lymph, and that of 400 children vaccinated not one survived.

The defence of the accused was intrusted to an able local Armenian lawyer, and having obtained a copy of it I venture to inclose it in the original Turkish. It contains, I am told, full details of the charges made against each of the accused, their defence thereto, and a recapitulation of the evidence.

When the precise sentence on the Bishop is known I will furnish the information to your Excellency.

The "robbers" of Zeitoun consist, I believe, of members of about forty families, who, when exasperated at what they consider oppression at the hands of their rulers, quit their homes and take to the road, plundering caravans, &c. At other times they are comparatively peaceful members of the community.

I have, &c.

(Signed) T. S. JAGO.

No. 41.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 150.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May 8, 1892.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 78 of the 4th ultimo on the subject of the legal proceedings instituted against the Bishop of Zeitoun and other Armenian prisoners on charges of sedition, I am able to corroborate, from what I have been told by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the statement made in Consul Jago's despatch from Aleppo, copy of which is herewith inclosed, to the effect that the prisoners will be afforded an opportunity of appealing to the higher Court in this capital against the sentences which have been passed upon them.

I shall not fail to acquaint your Lordship in due course with the result of the appeal.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure in No. 41.

Consul Jago to Sir Clare Ford.

Sir, *Alexandretta, April 22, 1892.*

REFERRING to my despatch dated the 19th instant, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that the Bishop of Zeitoun has been condemned to imprisonment for life, the teacher to five years' imprisonment, and the preacher to death.

They will appeal to Constantinople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) T. S. JAGO.

No. 42.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 118.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May 18, 1892.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 150 of the 8th instant, informing me that the Bishop of Zeitoun and the other Armenian prisoners who have been convicted at Aleppo on charges of sedition, will be afforded an opportunity of

passed to the higher Court at Constantinople against the sentences which have been passed upon them.

I have to request your Excellency to cause the further proceedings in this case to be watched by one of the staff attached to Her Majesty's Embassy, and to furnish me a Report on the trial.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 43.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 119. Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 23, 1892.*

M. MINASSE TCHÉRAZ, the editor of the "Arménie," called at this Office on the 18th instant, and had an interview with Mr. Lowther.

He represented that his paper reflects the views of the Constitutional Armenian party, whilst the "Haïas-dan" is the organ of the Radicals. To the latter party he attributed the Armenian plot recently discovered at Rustchuk, which he asserted was hatched in Russia and directed against the Sultan, and not against the Bulgarian Government.

M. Tchéraz left copies of two newspapers, the "Hentchak" or "Sonnette," and the "Turquie Libre," which are transmitted herewith.

The "Hentchak," he said, professes to be printed in London (see the last line), but is, in reality, at present printed at Athens. "London" is selected in order to deceive the Turkish Government. The same observation applies to the "Turquie Libre," which professes on its title-page to be printed in London, but is, in reality, printed in Paris.

M. Tchéraz stated that, at the time of the difficulty between France and Bulgaria, which arose from the expulsion of M. Chadourne from the latter country, M. Ribot, in order to please the Turkish Government, promised that the "Turquie Libre" should not be allowed to be printed in Paris, as had till then been the case, but that the newspaper had, nevertheless, continued to be printed there, although London appeared on the title-page.

I am in communication with Her Majesty's Postmaster-General in regard to the complaint of the Turkish Government that the "Turquie Libre" is circulated in Turkey through the agency of the British Post Office at Constantinople, a matter which formed the subject of your Excellency's despatch No. 155, Confidential, of the 9th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 44.

Acting Consul Catoni to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office May 27.)

(No. 14.)
Sir, *Aleppo, April 28, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the French Vice-Consul of Diarbekir with his family, "duly escorted by two zaptiehs," having left Alexandretta last week on his way to Aleppo, has been attacked, robbed, and atrociously maltreated by a gang of four Turkman brigands.

The same unfortunate case having been reproduced three weeks ago with native travellers, it results that the public safety in this vilayet is at present unsatisfactory, and this owing to mismanagement and apathy of the local authorities, namely, of the Governor-General Arif Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CATONI.

No. 45.

Consul Longworth to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office May 27.)

(No. 7.)
Sir, *Trebizond, May 4, 1892.*

I BEG to report the recall of Aali Bey and the appointment of Kadri Bey as Vali at Trebizond.

The ex-Financial Under-Secretary of State, Kadri Bey, arrived here yesterday from Constantinople, and the ex-Governor-General, Aali Bey, left this day for the capital.

Aali Bey-bin-Djemal Yussuf was named to Trebizond in April 1890. During his two years' tenure of office, he distinguished himself for his activity, intelligence, and honesty. His abilities as an Administrator have already been pointed out by me.

In my general Reports on the status of the vilayet for 1890 and 1891, mention is made of some of the improvements brought about by his agency. It will be enough, therefore, to remark here only that during his time justice has carried out and public security established to an extent unknown before for ages. Though a hot-tempered man, his feelings were never allowed to overcome for long his sense of right.

He was besides most conscientious in his work. Experience allows me to make the statement without reserve; for though, socially speaking, we were not quite on the best of terms, his official relations with me were invariably most cordial and at the same time most satisfactory.

The removal of his Excellency from here has been brought about by a series of intrigues. The Cadi, the Greek Archbishop, and the wealthy merchant Osman Effendi Lemlizadé lent themselves to this. They exerted themselves to the utmost with success, to the great disgust perhaps of all right-minded people. The one accused Aali Bey of having attended the circus not only during Ramazan, but during the pantomime "Pharoah's Dream," representing the sale by his brothers of Joseph their prophet Yussuf. The second charged him with having unduly hastened the conversion of a Greek to Mahommedanism. The third complained of his sent as member of the Administrative Council, to which he thought himself duly elected, having been disposed of to another candidate.

Aali Bey is anxious to have the impeachments brought against him thoroughly investigated. His purity of purpose and rectitude of conduct will, he hopes, exonerate him from all blame, and to gain once more the confidence of his Sovereign.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 46.

Mr. Hampson to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office May 27.)

(No. 27.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, May 7, 1892.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 18 of the 12th March, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the Patriarch having refused to accept the resignation of Mgr. Shishmanian, the latter continues to occupy the position of Archbishop here.

The Archbishop left yesterday for Echmiadzin to attend the election of the new Catholicos.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 47.

Mr. Howard to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received May 30.)

E
(No. 117. Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, May 26, 1892.*

A TELEGRAM from Tiflis, dated the 21st instant, states that the District Co of Kars the day before completed the investigation of the case in which forty-three Armenians were accused of forming an Association of resistance to the authorities, a

of murder, &c. The Association was a section of the Erzeroum branch of the Armenian Patriotic Committee, and the Court condemned Koudouniantz, the head of the Association, to twenty years' hard labour; twenty-five of the other prisoners were condemned to hard labour for periods varying from eight to fifteen years, and one to be enrolled in a disciplinary battalion; the remainder were acquitted.

The solidarity shown in this case between the Russian and Turkish Armenians, as regards their patriotic aspirations, seems to me of importance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY HOWARD.

No. 48.

Acting Consul Hampson to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, June 10.)

(No. 28.)
Erzeroum, May 21, 1892.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies in duplicate of three despatches received this week from Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice.

The first reports acts of violence committed against Nestorians by the son of the famous Sheikh Obeidullah. It is to be hoped that the proposal to send him to Constantinople will be carried out, and that he will be removed from the district where his family have gained such notoriety.

Mr. Fitzmaurice's despatch of the 6th instant reports the visit to Van of several Kurdish Chiefs, among them Hussein Pasha, of Patnos, respecting whose conduct I had the honour to make various reports last year (*vide* despatches of the 16th and 23rd January, and the 7th March, 1891). I have heard nothing lately in regard to Hussein, and he seems to have, for the moment at least, adopted a quieter course.

The refusal to allow delegates to attend the election of the new "Cataghikoss" at Etchmiazin (as reported in Mr. Fitzmaurice's despatch of the 11th instant) appears to be a harsh and ill-advised measure. Here no such question has arisen, the Archbishop, as I informed your Excellency in my despatch of the 7th instant, having left for Etchmiazin some time ago. This fact does not agree with the statement made by the Vali of Van, to account for the refusal of passports to the Van delegates, to the effect that the votes of all the Turkish Armenian Vicarages would be taken in Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 48.

Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Acting Consul Hampson.

Van, May 5, 1892.

Sir,

I HAVE been informed that Mehmed Sadik Effendi, son of Sheikh Obeidullah, famous for his revolt in Hekkiari against the Ottoman Government, and his encounters with Persian troops some ten years ago, had threatened and caused shots to be fired at the house of Mar Knanishu, the Nestorian Mettran (next in hierarchical order to Mar Shimoun, the Spiritual Chief of the Nestorians). The Mettran fled to Persia and took refuge with the English missionaries at Urmiah. He wrote to the late Vali, Khalil Bey, claiming protection against Mehmed Sadik Effendi, but received an unsatisfactory answer, and has been afraid to trust himself across the Turkish side of the frontier.

I mentioned the matter to the Vali, who promised to protect the Mettran and bring him back to his diocese in Shemsidin (Hekkiari). At the same time his Excellency informed me that Mehmed Sadik Effendi, who has occasionally of late shown tendencies to imitate the rebellious conduct of his father, has been summoned to Constantinople, it being expected that a sojourn at the capital will impress him with an idea of the power of his Government, and make him more amenable to authority in future.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 48.

Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Acting Consul Hampson.

Van, May 6, 1892.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that Bari Pasha, the Vali of Van, has lately summoned to Van all the Aghas and Chiefs of the Kurdish tribes in this vilayet. A number of them have already come in, and the rest are on their way, among whom is the notorious Hussein Agha (lately made Pasha), of Patnos. Patnos is in the Erzeroum Vilayet, but as a good part of the Haideranli tribe, of which he is Chieftain, are in this vilayet, it was decided he should come to Van.

While conversing with the Vali the other day on the subject, his Excellency told me that his object in summoning them to Van was to settle some intertribal differences, and to warn them that, now that they have become regular troops, they must act on their good behaviour and cease their raids. In fact, if the Vali can change them from people who do not sow, but yet reap (the crops of their more peaceful Christian neighbours), into people who sow as well as reap, it will go far to remove the just causes of complaint of the Armenian villagers against the Kurds.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 48.

Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Acting Consul Hampson.

Van, May 11, 1892.

Sir,

THE Armenians of Van chose as their delegates to proceed to Etchmiazin the Murakhass, or Vicar, of the Patriarch here in Van, and a merchant named Ananian. On their applying for passports to go to Russia, the Vali informed them that he could not grant them without reference to Constantinople. He accordingly telegraphed to the Sublime Porte, and the Murakhass at the same time telegraphed to the Patriarch. The Patriarch answered in a couple of days, saying that the passports would be granted. The Vali, however, though he twice repeated his telegram, did not receive a reply for a number of days, until, in fact, it was too late to reach Etchmiazin before the 3rd (15th) May, the date of the election of the "Cataghikoss." The reply of the Minister of the Interior (copy of which I inclose) was to the effect that, as the delegates from the provinces are not among those who, it has been decided, are to proceed to Etchmiazin, the Van Delegates could not be allowed to depart.

I asked the Vali, Was this only for Van, and was there any special reason? His Excellency replied that, as far as Van is concerned, there was no special reason, and that the order prohibiting the departure of the Van delegates was a general one for Turkey, it having been decided that the Patriarchate would collect the votes of the forty-three Turkish-Armenian Vicarages, and send them by a couple of special delegates to Etchmiazin.

As the Armenians here look upon this action of the Government as indicating a certain distrust and an interference in a matter purely religious, I thought it my duty to report it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

No. 49.

Acting Consul Hampson to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, June 10.)

(No. 29.)
Erzeroum, May 21, 1892.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatches No. 116 of the 26th December, 1891, and No. 8 of the 16th January, 1892, in which I reported to the Embassy the arrest of fifty-eight Armenians from the Nurman district, accused of being concerned in the murder of four Turks, I have now the honour to inform your Excellency that, after the preliminary examination, resulting in the release of twenty-three of the number,

the papers respecting the remaining thirty-five were sent to Constantinople. I now learn that, in accordance with telegraphic orders received from Constantinople, the case against these thirty-five is to be removed from the ordinary course of justice, and to be referred to a military court-martial ("Diwan-i-harb") here.

At the same time, I learn that orders were received that any case in which a soldier is involved is not to be examined by the Civil Courts, but by a court-martial.

These orders would seem to show that the threat to proclaim a state of siege throughout the country, which I reported in my No. 14 of the 27th February, is about to be put in force.

As far as I can learn, no sufficient reason exists for the adoption of such a measure, as tranquillity exists throughout the district, and certainly there is no such panic and want of confidence as was prevalent at this season last year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 50.

Acting Consul Hampson to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, June 10.)

(No. 31.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, May 28, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to forward copy in duplicate of a despatch received from Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian, reporting the arrival at Diarbekir of the Commander-in-chief of the 4th Army Corps, and the proceedings in connection with the organization of the Kurdish cavalry.

The flags for the new regiments lately arrived here, and were received with full honour.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

Inclosure in No. 50.

Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian to Acting Consul Hampson.

Sir, *Diarbekir, May 10, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to report, for your information, that the Commander of the 4th Corps d'Armée, his Excellency Mehemed Zeky Pasha, has finally paid his long-expected visit to Diarbekir, accompanied by a suite composed of a Colonel and three Captains Aides-de-camps to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, and two other officers of higher rank. He arrived on the 28th ultimo, and the reception accorded him was very brilliant, as, besides the civil and military authorities who went out in uniform to meet him, there was a very large concourse of people present to witness the procession.

The object of the visit, as stated in one of my private letters, was the organization of the Hamidieh regiments, two of which formed by Ibrahim Pasha, the Chief of Milly Ashiret (clan), were already here waiting the Marshal's arrival. The inauguration took place outside of the town with due ceremony, when the Imperial Ediet, explaining the object of the formation of the said regiments, and the obligations and privileges attaching to them, was solemnly read in their presence, and the colours especially designed for them were presented on behalf of the Sultan with His Majesty's gracious salutation. A few days after a detachment of another regiment headed by Mustafa Pasha, the Chief of the Miran Ashiret, arrived to greet the Marshal, and on the 5th instant his Excellency left with his suite for Djezireé, where the last regiment will with the same ceremony be organized.

It is expected that another regiment will shortly be formed from Tai Ashiret, a race of mixed Kurdish and Arab blood, dwelling in the district of Nesbin.

I have only to add that the men of the Hamidieh regiments in their new uniforms looked very smart and soldierlike, and their behaviour during their stay here was in every way orderly.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN.

No. 51.

Acting Consul Hampson to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, June 10.)

(No. 32.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, May 28, 1892.*

I HAVE to report to your Excellency a serious instance of lawlessness on the part of Kurds in the Bitlis district, and which may lead to grave results.

One of the members of the Grand Council here in Erzeroum is a certain Dervish Effendi, a rich and influential merchant of this town. Part of his business consists in the preparation and sale of dried meat ("pasdirma"). For this purpose he annually buys a considerable number of cattle. He owned, among others, some 200 cattle in the Malazgerd district of the Bitlis Vilayet, which were under the charge of about twenty of his men.

A short time ago news reached Dervish Effendi that these herds had been attacked by Kurds, presumably of the Hassananli tribe, and, after a fight in which several of his men were wounded, a large portion of the animals were carried off. Dervish Effendi appealed to the Vali here for help, and the latter at once telegraphed to the Vali of Bitlis, requesting him to take energetic measures for the punishment of the offenders and the recovery of the stolen property.

On receipt of this telegram the Vali of Bitlis sent out a force of about twenty mounted police, who tracked the Kurds and the animals they had carried off to a village of which I have been unable to ascertain the name. On the police approaching the village, a large body of Kurds, fully armed (it is said that they belonged to the new cavalry), came out and warned them not to advance, or they would be fired upon.

On this the officer in command, not liking to incur the responsibility of bloodshed without more distinct orders, withdrew his men, and returned to report to the Vali at Bitlis.

This is all that is known here at present. I shall not fail to inform your Excellency of the sequence of this affair as soon as possible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES S. HAMPSON.

No. 52.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 10.)

No. 186.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 6, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 118 of the 18th ultimo, informing me of your Lordship's desire that a member of the staff of Her Majesty's Embassy should be instructed to watch the case of the Bishop of Zeitoun, when brought before the "Cour de Cassation" on appeal to Constantinople.

This Court simply decides if there has been at any stage of the proceedings any irregularity of procedure, and if the sentence is in conformity with that prescribed by the Criminal Code. The proceedings are *in camerâ*, and no pleadings or evidence are heard, nor do the parties interested appear. There is merely an examination of documents or of any Memorandum presented by the condemned on his appeal to the Court.

Consequently, I have the honour to submit that this is a case in which it would be impossible for a member of Her Majesty's Embassy to watch the proceedings. Mindful, however, of the interest displayed by your Lordship in this matter, I availed myself of an interview with Said Pasha on the 2nd instant to speak strongly to his Excellency on the subject.

I pointed out to his Excellency the various irregularities which had occurred during the course of the trial, as reported in Mr. Jago's despatch No. 11 of the 19th April, and I dwelt upon the bad impression which the confirmation of such a sentence on a high ecclesiastic would cause, especially in England, where the matter had already attracted considerable attention in general as well as in official circles. I also advised his Excellency to call the attention of the Minister of Justice to the fact of the irregularities in the proceedings at the trial, which have been brought to the knowledge of the public in England and of Her Majesty's Embassy.

I told his Excellency that such representations as I made to him in this matter of internal administration were made in a friendly spirit and out of regard for the welfare of the Ottoman Empire and its subjects, and that if a mitigation of the sentence could be obtained, or if His Imperial Majesty, with the clemency which has always distinguished him, would deign to pardon the offenders, a most favourable impression would be produced in England and upon Her Majesty's Government.

His Excellency listened with interest to my statement, and asked that I should furnish him with a Memorandum upon the subject in Turkish, which he might be able to put before the Council of Ministers which was to meet yesterday.

I accordingly sent his Excellency a translation in Turkish of the Memorandum of which I have the honour to inclose copy herewith.

I shall not fail to continue to watch and to report to your Lordship the development of this affair.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure in No. 52.

Memorandum on the Case of the Bishop of Zeitoun.

THE Bishop of Zeitoun has been condemned to imprisonment for life, a teacher to five years' imprisonment, and a preacher to death. Twenty-three others of the inhabitants of Zeitoun have also been found guilty, and eleven more found guilty by default.

The case will be revised by the Court of Cassation.

At the trial at Aleppo no witnesses were allowed to be called for the defence. Twenty-two witnesses, five Moslems and seventeen Armenians, who had previously given their evidence before the Special Commission at Marash, were produced for corroboration of their testimony, when all, without exception, asserted their alleged evidence to be inaccurate in the most important particulars, and instead of being eye-witnesses to facts as stated in the Minutes of the Commission, they only knew of them by hearsay.

For instance, the Bishop was charged, on the alleged evidence of the President of the Zeitoun Municipality, of constructing, contiguous to his monastery, a building for the purposes of rebellion. The President of the Municipality, however, at the trial, confirmed the statement of the Bishop that the building was simply the reconstruction of a few guest chambers which had fallen into ruin, and that they were restored and rebuilt with the full cognizance and permission of the Municipality.

Again, an Armenian of Zeitoun, principal witness for the prosecution to prove the connivance of the Bishop and others of the accused in the events which led to the disturbances, and whose evidence, as taken by the Marash Commission, was very strong, appeared, and solemnly declared his alleged evidence to be absolutely false, and fabricated by the Special Commission. He was sent to prison by the President of the Appeal Court as a liar, and, although again brought up, declined to alter his statement; he is still in prison.

No evidence incriminating any person for the murder of the gendarme at Zeitoun was produced.

The Bishop, in defence, called attention to the repeated warnings he had addressed to the authorities at Aleppo and Constantinople of the inevitable consequences which would result if the Governor of Marash continued in his system of persecution against the Zeitounlis.

The trial of the Bishop and others has attracted the greatest possible attention in England, where the irregularities which took place at the trial have been much commented upon. The confirmation by the "Cour de Cassation" of such a sentence on a high ecclesiastical dignitary and the other unfortunate people will, no doubt, make a very injurious impression, and if a mitigation or reversal of the sentence could be obtained (and there seems to be good reason for it), or if His Imperial Majesty, with the clemency which has always distinguished him, would deign to pardon the offenders, a most favourable impression would be produced in England in general as well as in official circles.

No. 53.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 187.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 6, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, inclosing a letter from the Rev. C. H. Robinson, for whom, by your Lordship's instructions, I obtained a letter of recommendation from the Porte to the Vali of Adana.

Mr. Robinson complains that during his journey the local authorities who had been apprized of his coming took every means to thwart him in his intentions, resorting even to the persecution by imprisonment of those natives who had any communication with him.

Colonel Trotter informs me that he has sent a copy of Mr. Robinson's letter to Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Aleppo, but, so far, I have not received any Report from Mr. Catoni on the subject.

I have, however, relying on the truth and accuracy of Mr. Robinson's statements, considered it my duty to draw the serious attention of the Grand Vizier to Mr. Robinson's allegations in a Memorandum, of which I have the honour to inclose copy herewith; and I have asked that an inquiry may be instituted by the Turkish Government, and the local authorities severely reprimanded if proved to have failed in their duty.

Djevad Pasha has assured me, in reply, that he will lose no time in complying with my request, by ordering a strict inquiry into the charges brought by Mr. Robinson.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 53.

Colonel Trotter to Sir Clare Ford.

Sir, *Beyrout, May 11, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Excellency's information, copy of a letter I have received from the Rev. C. H. Robinson, Vice-Chancellor of Truro Cathedral, giving information on the state of affairs in Cilicia and Northern Syria.

I understand that Mr. Robinson was dispatched by high ecclesiastical authorities in England on a mission to Cilicia with a view of studying how a *rapprochement* could be brought about between the Anglican and Armenian Churches; and that application had been made on his behalf at Constantinople for a travelling Firman, or a Vizirial letter. That a Vizirial letter was furnished to him, which did not reach him in time for his journey, but that the local authorities appeared to have been forewarned from Constantinople of the nature of his mission; and that, instead of receiving aid and assistance from the local authorities, he was thwarted by them in every possible manner.

I have sent a copy of this letter to Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Aleppo for his information, but have refrained from sending him any instructions on the subject, as he is in direct correspondence with your Excellency on the state of affairs within his Consular jurisdiction.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY TROTTER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 53.

The Rev. C. H. Robinson to Colonel Trotter.

My dear Colonel Trotter, *Steam-ship "Djemnah," April 10, 1892.*

IN accordance with your suggestion that I should write out a short Memorandum of the substance of our conversation this afternoon, I am herewith sending a short statement of what I have recently seen and heard during a journey through Cilicia, Cappadocia, Mesopotamia, and Northern Syria. From a very large number of conversations with Armenians, American missionaries, and others, I gathered that the state of the Armenian Christians is deplorable in the extreme, and that the oppression of them by the Turkish Government is worse now than it has almost ever been. I stayed two nights in the Monastery of Sis, in Cilicia; the result of my visit (as the Bishop of

Adana has since informed me) was that the Pasha sent to arrest the three Armenian teachers of the Monastery school; one of them fled away and disappeared; the others are, I understand, at present in prison, where they have been for about a month. The ground of their imprisonment, as stated by the Turkish authorities, is that they were seen conversing with an Englishman. At Adana I called on the Patriarch of Sis; after I left, an Armenian who had acted as my interpreter (my own knowledge of Armenian being imperfect) was seized and put in prison. The Bishop of Adana tells me that he has been recently told by the Turkish authorities that he may resign his Bishopric and go, because he was seen speaking with a foreigner.

The Bishop of Zeitoun and forty-nine of his people are at present, and have been for months, in prison at Aleppo, in consequence of a political disturbance which took place at Zeitoun, in which I have every reason to believe the Bishop had no concern whatever: no trial, moreover, having been held, the real authors of the disturbance had fled away.

The Government is using every effort to interfere with and to close the existing native Armenian schools. Case after case came to my certain knowledge of Armenians who had been or were now imprisoned without any pretence of a trial, and who were kept in prison until a heavy bribe should have been paid on their behalf. Constant pressure is being brought to bear upon the Armenians to induce them to become Mahommedans. Whilst I was at Marash an Armenian Christian became a Mahommedan, in order to secure some property of which he would otherwise have been defrauded by the Government authorities. No single instance is known of a Mahommedan becoming a Christian. Unless orders to the contrary should be received from the Turkish authorities at Constantinople, there is every probability that the existing Armenian schools will be still further interfered with, the children attending such being thus compelled to attend Mahommedan schools. It is impossible for any one who has not travelled for some time amongst the Armenians to realize how cruel and constant is the oppression under which they are suffering at the present time.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES H. ROBINSON.

P.S.—My address is Rev. C. H. Robinson, Vice-Chancellor, Truro Cathedral, England.

C. H. R.

Inclosure 3 in No. 53.

Memorandum.

HER Britannic Majesty's Embassy regrets to inform the Sublime Porte that an English gentleman travelling in Asia Minor and Northern Syria has complained that the local authorities have placed serious difficulties in his way during his travels.

Without entering into details, Her Majesty's Embassy desires to confine itself on this occasion to a narrative of the following facts:

Mr. Robinson stayed two nights in the Monastery of Sis. The Governor forthwith sent to arrest the three Armenian teachers of the Monastery school. Two of them have been in prison for a month.

An Armenian, who acted as Mr. Robinson's interpreter when he visited the Patriarch of Sis, was seized and put in prison.

A high Ecclesiastical Armenian functionary at Adana has been censured for speaking with Mr. Robinson. The natural consequence of such action was to render Mr. Robinson's journey most unpleasant.

Mr. Robinson was furnished with a letter of recommendation from the Minister of the Interior to the Vali of Adana, given at the official request of Her Majesty's Embassy to Said Pasha, acting under instructions from the Marquis of Salisbury.

Her Majesty's Embassy begs that an inquiry will be made into the matter, and that if the local authorities have failed in their duty towards the subject of a friendly Power, they may be severely reprehended.

If it is a fact that persons conversing with English gentlemen travelling in Turkey become objects of suspicion to the local authorities, it will make a very painful impression on public opinion in England, and Her Majesty's Embassy is confident that the Sublime Porte will not approve of such proceedings, and will take means to prevent their recurrence.

(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Constantinople, May 26, 1892.

No. 54.

Armenian Patriotic Association to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(*Received June* 13.)

My Lord, 25, *Chesilton Road, Fulham, London, June* 10, 1892.

A CAREFUL perusal of the interesting Blue Book, "Turkey No. 1 (1892)," presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty, in April of this year, together with the Reports we have received from Armenia, shows that the Memorial of the Committee of Armenian residents in London, dated the 15th March, 1888, which our Chairman had the honour of presenting to your Lordship, still holds the field, and is quite as applicable to the state of things obtaining in Armenia now as then.

In that Memorial we referred to the representations which had been made, from time to time, to Her Majesty's Government by Armenians in this country, collectively and individually, on "the extremely unfavourable and unsatisfactory state of things produced in Armenia by the inexplicable neglect of the Sublime Porte to carry out the local and administrative reforms promised to the Armenian people by Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin," and expressed our deep appreciation of the communications and remonstrances which Her Majesty's successive Ambassadors at Constantinople had addressed to the Sublime Porte on the subject of the arbitrary proceedings of the Turkish authorities in the Armenian fatherland.

It cannot, however, be denied for a moment that, in spite of the strenuous efforts which Her Majesty's Representatives appear to have made in Turkey in assisting the Turkish Government in its professed desire to govern the provinces inhabited by the Armenians with justice, and to maintain order in them, no appreciable improvement has been brought about in the condition of the unhappy Armenians, who are now living under a system of unexampled severity and terrorism. This fact, added to the neglect of the Sultan's Government to introduce in Armenia the remedial measures which it was the aim and wish of Great Britain, who made the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1878, and of the Powers who signed the Berlin Treaty, to see introduced, not only belies the professions of the Sublime Porte, but shows that the latter still remains a complete stranger to its Treaty obligations, not only towards its own subjects of the Armenian race and nation, but also towards Great Britain and towards Europe, to whom the Armenians appealed and were heard fourteen years ago.

The Sublime Porte having contracted with Europe to perform certain duties towards its Armenian subjects, it is difficult to understand on what legal or plausible grounds Armenians have been so constantly and in such large numbers arrested, imprisoned, exiled, or otherwise punished for alleged conspiracy and high treason. If the 58th Article of the Turkish Criminal Code has been, and is, cited against those Armenians who are found expressing or disseminating the view in the Armenian provinces or elsewhere, that the best method of giving equality, freedom, and security to the people of Armenia is the adoption of a system of administration like that of the Lebanon, we have, *per contra*, the explicit terms of Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin, the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1878, the collective note of the Ambassadors of the 7th September, 1880, the principles of the Hatti-Shérif of Gulhané, and those of the Hatti-Hoomayoun of 1856, which ought to govern, and are regarded as governing, all the Codes, Laws, or Regulations promulgated or abrogated in Turkey under the Sultan's name and authority; and, therefore, we see no justification whatever for the application of the provisions of this Article, or of any other similar Article to the Armenians, who criticize the inaction of the Porte, or the conduct of its officials in Armenia under the said Treaties.

What makes the condition of the Armenians if possible even more grievous and intolerable is, that the Petitions and Memorials of the Armenian Patriarchate at Constantinople for the maintenance of the ecclesiastical rights and privileges under existing Firmans granted to the Armenian community, however moderate in tone and unexceptionable in substance, receive no serious or sympathetic attention from the Sublime Porte.

In connection with this subject we may observe in passing that the Holy religion which the Armenians profess, the services and ceremonies which they celebrate in their churches, the festivals which they keep, and the noble traditions they hold, have been handed down to them from the earliest centuries of the Christian era, when Armenia was an independent and powerful kingdom, the Armenians a civilized nation in the European sense, and no Turk had as yet set foot in their classic land; and, besides, it is an uncontested historic fact that their power as an independent nation,

notwithstanding many vicissitudes, lasted till the end of the fourteenth century, which is in itself an ample evidence of their gallant spirit and tenacious devotion to their religious and national instincts. But, as we have often explained, in the peculiar conditions in which Turkey exists, the intense nationalism of the Armenians, and their desire to live a peaceful, industrial, and contented life under an improved régime in Armenia, has no incompatibility with either the suzerainty of the Sultan or the safety of the Ottoman Empire. Such an improved régime would be one under which no favour or bias could be shown in Armenia, diplomatically miscalled Kurdistan, to one class of the population to the detriment of another, under which the Armenians could have a proper share in the administration of their country, and under which there could be no religious persecution or intolerance, and there would be a just incidence of taxation.

The Armenians believe that it is the duty of Great Britain to bring Turkey, whom she has befriended in more than one desperate crisis in its history, to see the necessity of solving the Armenian question in a loyal and straightforward manner, which would not only be appreciated by the British nation, but by all Europe. In our humble opinion the experience of recent years ought to show Her Majesty's Government that, however beneficial it may be considered to bring to the notice of the provincial Governors, or of the Central Government, specific cases of miscarriage of justice, hardship, and ill-treatment, the present form of the Government and administration of Armenia, in which so many occult influences are brought into play, is primarily responsible for a very considerable portion of the sufferings of the Armenian people, and no right-minded person can deny that these sufferings are now, fourteen years after the signature of the Treaty of Berlin, as severe as ever, if not more so. We therefore think that Her Majesty's Ambassador ought to apply himself to changing the false ideas and false attitude which the Sublime Porte has thought fit to adopt towards its Armenian subjects since 1878, and this cannot be done unless Her Majesty's Government itself takes larger and more comprehensive views in the matter of Armenian reforms in the spirit of the collective note of 1880.

At the present time the Armenians appear to be singled out for particular training and instruction by the Ottoman authorities in the way that a "rayah" or subject people should go, irrespective of International Treaties and compacts made in their interest by the Sublime Porte. The Turkish prisons are these educational centres, and any Armenian clergyman, schoolmaster, teacher, or other educated person is specially liable on the flimsiest and vaguest charges of sedition and conspiracy or some fancied political crime to be imprisoned for months and years without trial, or if tried, is, in most cases, sure to be found guilty and punished, whilst infamous brigands and criminals, such as Hussén Aghn, of Patnos, to whom frequent reference is made in the present Blue Book, a man guilty of arson, murder, robbery, and rape, are left at large, treated as the friends of the Sultan, and never receive their due punishment, probably because they are Mudirs, or Government officials "able to produce a considerable body of (Kurdish) men well mounted and armed with Martini-Henry rifles," and so contribute to the military strength of the Ottoman Empire. Need we, therefore, be surprised if the innocent victims of Turkish tyranny are sometimes found complaining that it seems to be the settled policy of the Turks to exterminate their race and nation, not by the sword at one stroke, but by the slow and more astute process of constant oppression, injustice, and class hatred, which is fomented and kept up for political aims and objects?

It has often been affirmed that the Armenians are in a great minority compared to the bulk of the Mahommedan population, and endless statistics have been published to confirm this view, nevertheless, the sharp look-out kept for seditious Armenians, the hunt for Armenian historical and religious books in which the word "Armenia," "the Armenian kingdom and nation" necessarily occur, the burning of Bibles even for the same reason, the constant arrest of those who happen to possess copies of national or patriotic songs, or are the bearers of letters in which the grievances of the Armenians are mentioned, seem to us to show that either the Armenians are really more numerous than they are represented, or that the authorities are suffering from the effects of a guilty conscience as regards their administrative proceedings, and the terror of a successful Armenian revolution is proportionally violent in their minds. If, however, the Armenians were inclined to revolt, they could find no better justification than the acts of which the officers of the Sultan's peace in Armenia rendered themselves guilty, and which are detailed in Inclosure 2, No. 9, of the present Blue Book; and this in a village presumably in the Government of the much praised Raouf Pasha, the model Turkish Governor!

Unfortunately this is not an isolated case of blackest crime in the lowest grade of Turkish officials, the Reports in the present Blue Book bristle with cases of corruption, miscarriage of justice, apathy, extortion, murder, and the like throughout Armenia, to which the Christians are specially subjected, and these are grievances quite sufficient in themselves for giving effect to the desire of the Armenians to unite the Armenian provinces under one Governor-General appointed by the Signatory Powers of the Treaty of Berlin, and to reform the administration with their advice and under their immediate supervision. This being within the four corners of the Treaty of Berlin and the Anglo-Turkish Convention, we cannot help hoping that Her Majesty's Government will see these matters in the light in which they appear to your Lordship's present memorialists, and deal with the Armenian question in a humane, practical, and truly statesmanlike spirit.

We have, &c.
(On behalf of the Armenian Patriotic Association),
(Signed) G. HAGOPIAN, *Chairman.*
PETRUS AGANOOR.
JAMES A. MALCOLM.
E. J. MARFITT.
M. J. PAUL.
M. SEVASLY.

No. 55.

Extract from the "Journal de Saint-Pétersbourg" of May 28 *(June* 9), 1892.—*(Received at the Foreign Office, June* 13.)

LES JOURNAUX RUSSES.—Il a été beaucoup question ces derniers temps de l'élection des candidats à la dignité de Catholicos Arménien à Etchmiadzine. M. A. Soustchow publie maintenant dans la "Gazette de Moscou" une intéressante correspondance de ce célèbre monastère, qui donne un tableau plein d'animation des élections.

Il y a longtemps qu'Etchmiadzine n'avait vu une telle affluence de visiteurs, venus des différentes parties de l'Asie et de l'Europe, voire même d'Amérique. Les électeurs étaient au nombre de 100.

Le Catholicos, on le sait, est le chef de l'Église Grégorienne; c'est lui qui consacre les Évêques Arméniens de tous les pays du monde et leur fournit l'huile sainte. En Turquie, où existe le Patriarche Arméno-Grégorien de Constantinople, sa juridiction se limite à ces doubles fonctions; en Russie, par contre, il joue un rôle important parmi ses nationaux au point de vue ecclésiastique et scolaire.

La dernière lutte électorale avait un cachet tout particulier, le nombre des délégués Turcs étant considérable. Il n'en est pas venu moins de quarante. L'assemblée électorale se compose, outre les 15 voix des membres du Synode d'Etchmiadzine et des doyens d'âge parmi les moines de ce monastère, de deux délégués envoyés par chaque diocèse Arménien. Or, en Turquie il y en a 45, tandis qu'en Russie il n'en existe que 6. De cette façon les Arméniens de l'Empire Ottoman disposent de 90 voix des diocèses Russes et les 4 voix des diocèses Indo-Persans, qui se trouvent sous la juridiction immédiate du Catholicos.

L'anomalie de cette distribution des voix saute aux yeux, et néanmoins, cette fois, elle n'a pas nui à l'issue des élections. Les délégués Turcs avaient leurs candidats, mais aussitôt qu'ils ont eu connaissance du désir presque unanime de la population locale, ils y ont renoncé et ont voté pour Mgr. Chrimian, l'Ex-Patriarche de Constantinople, qui, de cette façon, a réuni tous les suffrages, ne faisant pas opposition non plus à Mgr. Izmirlian, qui a été élu second candidat par 50 voix, Mgr. Chrimian ayant obtenu 72.

C'est vers la fin d'Avril que les délégués ont commencé à arriver à Etchmiadzine. Vers le 1er Mai ils y étaient tous réunis. Dès ce moment ont commencé les réunions secrètes et c'est alors que les intentions des Turcs et des Russes se sont fait jour et qu'on a fini par aboutir à un accord. C'est la voix du peuple qui a indiqué le nom de Mgr. Chrimian, dont jusque-là on avait peu parlé.

Le 4 Mai, l'assemblée, appelée à choisir quatre candidats, s'était réunie à la Cathédrale d'Etchmiadzine. Soixante-six délégués, sans compter M. le Conseiller Privé Pribil, le représentant du pouvoir temporel Russe, ont pris place à des tables dressées en face du Pautel. C'est là que M. Arakélian, le délégué laïque Indo-Persan, a

désigné à l'attention des électeurs Mgr. Chrimian, dans un discours chaleureux qui a été imprimé et qu'on a accueilli avec enthousiasme le lendemain dans l'espèce de meeting populaire qui s'était improvisé sur la place de la Cathédrale. Le principal orateur a été M. Sérafian, un Arménien d'Amérique, envoyé par ses coreligionnaires auprès du Schah de Perse et qui s'est rendu en même temps à Etchmiadzine, mais sans pouvoir figurer dans l'assemblée élective à titre de délégué Américain, l'Église, Arménienne, dans le Nouveau-Monde, ne comptant qu'une communauté présidée par un simple prêtre.

C'est le lendemain, le 5 Mai, que l'élection définitive a eu lieu. Vers 3 heures, les résultats en étaient connus et ils ont été accueillis avec transport par le peuple, qui s'agitait autour de la Cathédrale. On faisait des ovations à tous les sortants. Dans la même assemblée, on a élu les députés chargés de porter à M. l'Administrateur-Général du Caucase les noms des deux candidats élus, afin qu'ils soient soumis au choix du Souverain.

No. 56.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 138.)

Foreign Office, June 15, 1892.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 186 of the 6th instant, in regard to the trial of the Bishop of Zeitoun.

I approve of the course which you have taken in the matter, of your language to Said Pasha, and of the terms of the Memorandum which you communicated to him.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 57.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 139.)

Foreign Office, June 15, 1892.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 187 of the 6th instant in regard to the Rev. C. H. Robinson's complaint of the conduct of the Turkish authorities towards himself and those of the natives of the country who had any communication with him during his recent journey in Asia Minor and Northern Syria.

I approve of the steps which you have taken in the matter.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 58.

Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Acting Consul Hampson.—(Received at the Foreign Office, June 24.)

(No. 11.)

Van, May 25, 1892.

Sir,

WITH reference to the formation of the Hamidiyyé regiments of Kurdish cavalry, I have the honour to report an extension of the scheme. The Vali of Van summoned the Chiefs of the Van Yezidis, who have hitherto been in the same category as the Kurdish tribes, neither being subject to the conscription, nor paying the military exemption tax.

His Excellency the Vali made them three proposals: to become subject to the regular conscription, to pay the military exemption tax, or else be enrolled in the Hamidiyyé regiments like the Kurds. The Yezidi Chiefs finally decided to accept the latter proposal, and will be duly enrolled and placed on the same footing as the Kurds.

The Yezidis in this vilayet number about 10,000 souls, their numbers in the neighbouring Vilayets of Mosul and Bitlis being computed at about the same, which would give a total in round numbers of from 30,000 to 40,000.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

No. 59.

Consul Graves to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, June 24.)

(No. 35.)

Sir,

Erzeroum, June 10, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copy in duplicate of a despatch which has been addressed to this Consulate by Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice, reporting the appointment of a Mixed Turco-Persian Commission to examine into and settle outstanding claims between Turkish and Persian subjects on the frontier.

Mr. Fitzmaurice also reports a rumour to the effect that the Persian Government contemplate introducing an organization similar to that of the Hamidiyyé regiments among the Kurdish tribes on the Persian side of the frontier, if that system should prove successful in Turkey.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure in No. 59.

Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Acting-Consul Hampson.

Sir,

Van, May 31, 1892.

THE unsettled state of the Turco-Persian border, with the raids of Turkish Kurds into Persian, and those of Persian Kurds into Turkish territory, have given rise to a number of outstanding claims between Turkish and Persian subjects.

A Turkish Commission, composed of Salih Bey, a Kaïmakam of the Van reserves, with Hadji Mustapha Effendi, a Van Notable, are to proceed to the frontier, where they are to meet a Persian Delegation composed of Mirza Moussa Khan and Mirza Masum Khan, both former Persian Consuls in this town. Their duty will be to examine into and settle all existing disputes on the frontier.

I have been informed, though the information at this distance must be taken with a certain amount of caution, that the Persian Government at Tehran intends, in the event of the success of the new Hamidiyyé regiments of Kurdish cavalry, to introduce a similar military system among the Kurds on the Persian side of the frontier.

Should the formation of the Hamidiyyé regiments have the effect of restraining the lawlessness of Turkish Kurds, there can be no doubt that any such success would be partially neutralized by the presence on the other side of the border of Persian Kurds continuing their old free and easy habits. This would be more especially the case as the frontier in some places divides a Kurdish tribe, leaving one portion Turkish and the remainder Persian subjects.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

No. 60.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 196.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, June 15, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch to your Lordship No. 186 of the 6th instant, reporting the representations made by me to Said Pasha respecting the sentence

passed upon the Bishop of Zeitoun and his fellow-prisoners, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Aleppo, reporting that twenty-two prisoners acquitted by the Court of Appeal at Aleppo are still detained in prison, and that the Bishop of Fournous has been recently arrested and imprisoned without trial, and without any apparent reason.

Upon the receipt of this despatch I communicated its contents to Saïd Pasha in a short Memorandum, and his Excellency has promised to speak to the Minister of Justice on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure in No. 60.

Acting Consul Catoni to Sir Clare Ford.

Sir, *Aleppo, May 24, 1892.*

WITH reference to Mr. Consul Jago's despatch of the 19th ultimo on the subject of the Zeitoun prisoners, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that the twenty-two persons who have been acquitted by the Court of Appeal at this place are still detained in prison, and I am privately informed that they will not be released until they pay again a sum of 100 Turkish liras "for bribes." I have also learnt that a few days ago the Armenian Bishop of Fournous, Mgr. Nigagos, a very old and venerable man, having been very kindly invited by his Excellency Arif Pasha, Governor-General of Aleppo, to come here, two days after his arrival in this town has been arrested and put in prison without any apparent reason or trial. I must add that this fact has caused great indignation among the Christians of this country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. CATONI.

No. 61.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 199.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 17, 1892.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 187 of the 6th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of an explanatory Memorandum which I have received from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in reply to that sent in by me to Said Pasha, calling his Excellency's attention to the ill-treatment experienced by Mr. Robinson during his recent journey in Cilicia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure in No. 61.

Memorandum.

LE Département Impérial de la Justice, saisi des faits mentionnés dans la notice du 26 Mai, n'ayant aucune connaissance de l'arrestation des trois professeurs Arméniens de l'école du Monastère de Sis, lors du séjour de Mr. Robinson dans cet établissement, ni de l'emprisonnement d'un autre Arménien, qui lui avait servi d'interprète, a demandé les éclaircissements à ce sujet aux autorités d'Adana, et ne manquera pas de faire connaître les informations qu'il recevra.

En attendant, la Sublime Porte ne peut que s'élever vivement contre les suppositions que les personnes s'entretenant avec des voyageurs Anglais deviennent suspectes, pareille hypothèse ne se conciliant ni avec les sentiments, ni avec les dispositions dont les autorités Impériales sont animées envers la grande nation amie.

Quant au haut dignitaire ecclésiastique, auquel un blâme aurait été infligé pour s'être entretenu avec Mr. Robinson, si c'est à l'Archevêque Arménien d'Adana, Mgr. Miguirditch, qu'il est fait allusion, ce prélat a été en effet blâmé non point pour avoir causé avec ce voyageur, mais bien pour avoir voulu mettre la dissension parmi la communauté Arménienne sur les plaintes de laquelle, d'ailleurs, on avait précédemment décidé de l'éloigner de ces parages.

Le 14 Juin, 1892.

No. 62.

The Rev. C. Robinson to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 2.)

Dear Sir, *Truro, July 1, 1892.*

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of a letter dated the 29th June, referring to one of mine which had been addressed to the British Consul at Beyrout. I need perhaps scarcely say how entirely unsatisfactory and incorrect the explanations offered by the Grand Vizier appear to me. Within the last few days I have received further confirmation of the conduct of the Turkish authorities complained of in a letter from an American missionary resident in Marash. I stayed with him four days, 12th-16th March last, and held several conversations with some of the Armenian priests there on subjects in no way connected with politics. I am now informed that several with whom I was seen to converse have suffered, i.e., been imprisoned in consequence, and I am perfectly certain as to the correctness of the statement.

Whilst there I called on the Turkish authorities, and was at once accused by them of being sent as a spy by the English Government, and they would believe no assurances to the contrary. The oppression of the Christians throughout Cappadocia, Mesopotamia, and Cilicia is indeed far worse than anything which my letter suggested. They are imprisoned without trial, and on the most ridiculous pretences, and in many cases are poisoned whilst in prison. I am glad that some remonstrance has been made to the Grand Vizier, but cannot but feel entirely dissatisfied with his reply to the same.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) CHAS. H. ROBINSON.

No. 63.

Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Acting Consul Humpson.—(Received at the Foreign Office, July 8.)

(No. 13.)
Sir, *Van, June 6, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to report the arrival here of Zeki Pasha, the Mushir of the 4th Army Corps. He comes from his tour round by Diarbekir, Mardin, and Sert, where he has been engaged in enrolling the Milli and Miran Kurds. The Aghas and Chiefs of the Van Kurds have been summoned here to meet him, and will receive their regiment colours from him. The Aghas have come attended by the newly-made Kurdish officers and a small retinue. I believe they were originally to have come in full force, but they have been unable to do so owing to deficiency in cavalry mounts, and also owing to the fact that many members of a tribe have been enrolled in two and even three regiments of the same tribe.

Zeki Pasha, the Mushir, when in the neighbourhood of Mardin, has been in communication with the Heads of the large and important Arab tribes of Shamar and Aneze in Mesopotamia, which perhaps would seem to point to the existence on the part of the Ottoman Government of an intention to subsequently form the Arab tribes into a military organization similar to that for the Kurds.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

No. 64.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 8.)

(No. 213.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 29, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul at Van, reporting upon the impression made on the Armenian population by the publication in the Turkish press of certain extracts from a Parliamentary Blue Book recently published.

I have the honour to state that similar statements were made some little time ago in the Constantinople Turkish press, but, as Her Majesty's Embassy has not been furnished with a copy of the Blue Book in question, I was unable to verify the correctness of the assertions made.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure in No. 64.

Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Acting Consul Hampson.

Sir, *Van, June 8, 1892.*

THE comments on the White Book some time ago presented to Parliament which have lately appeared in the Turkish press, and have been copied into the Armenian papers, though valueless for those who have had an opportunity of reading the original, have not been without effect in prejudicing the action of Her Majesty's Government in the eyes of the Armenian population of this locality.

Without drawing the conclusion that such was the intended object of their publication, the singular coincidence of a number of Turkish papers (*e.g.*, the "Sabah," the "Tarik," the "Zerjuman-i-Hakkikat," &c.) having chosen the same day for their comments, and the still more singular coincidence of their selecting out of a mass of despatches extending over close on ninety pages the three identical same despatches, while completely ignoring the numerous other despatches which might not have had the same effect, point clearly to their inspired origin and their one-sided character.

The Armenians of Van, to whom the contents of the White Book have been presented in the far from impartial form, have not been slow to draw the conclusion that Her Majesty's Government has relaxed its efforts to secure the amelioration of the lot of the Christian populations in these parts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

No. 65.

Acting Consul Catoni to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, July 19.)

(Telegraphic.) *Aleppo, July 19, 1892, 8 P.M.*

I AM informed that twenty-two prisoners reported in my despatch No. 15 have been released.

No. 66.

Mr. Eyres to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, July 22.)

E
(No. 18. Confidential.)
Sir, *Damascus, June 16, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the ex-Vali Osman Nouri Pasha left Damascus on the 14th instant *en route* for the Hedjaz. His Excellency left behind him the reputation of being the most corrupt Governor that Damascus has seen for many years. Bribes were openly taken in the Serai, and in fact there was no sort of concealment attempted with regard to their nefarious transactions. The latest victim of the Pasha was Sheikh Ibrahim El Atrash, Kaïmakam of the Druse Mountain in the

Hauran, who was the cause of the rising among the Druses in 1890. The Sheikh was summoned to Damascus and imprisoned in default of payment of 500*l*. The departure of the Pasha was therefore peculiarly well-timed for the Sheikh, who has thus been saved from the infliction of this heavy fine.

It is perhaps partly due to the malversation of the Governor-General, and partly to coincidence, that many simultaneous disturbances have occurred in this province of late. I have already had the honour to report to your Excellency the difficulties encountered by the pilgrim caravan, with regard to which no further news has reached me. Besides this, the Druses of the Hermon district have been quarrelling with their Christian neighbours, but nothing very serious has occurred. The authorities have had difficulties in the Hauran with the Arabs, who have absolutely refused to allow their lands to be registered on the "tapou" system, and so far the Government has been unable to effect its purpose. It is a matter of common observation that troubles in the Hauran always produce a reflex action on this city, and as if to prove the truth of this theory, the Moslems of the quarter adjoining the Great Mosque fell on one of the cavasses of the Russian Consulate and beat him severely, while he was engaged in assisting the wife of the Russian Vice-Consul, whose carriage had met with an accident. Various Moslems were imprisoned for a few days, but were released shortly afterwards with the assent of the Vice-Consul.

The Acting Governor-General, Kemal Bey, is expected here to-morrow, and being known, as he is, as a man of probity and energy, it is probable that he will be able to put a different complexion on the state of affairs here, if only he be allowed sufficient time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

No. 67.

Acting Consul Catoni to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, July 22.)

(No. 17.)
Sir, *Aleppo, June 20, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copy of a paragraph from Mr. Vice-Consul Lykiardopulo's letter, addressed to me on the 12th instant, respecting the condition of affairs in the Vilayet of Adana.

I may add that, unhappily, the facts reported by Mr. Lykiardopulo are more or less repeated "under the government of Arif Pasha," even in the Province of Aleppo; and I am inclined to believe that, "if energetic measures are not taken," this vexatious conduct of the Turks towards the Christians of these parts will gradually cause serious consequences.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. CATONI.

Inclosure in No. 67.

Copy of the paragraph of Vice-Consul Lykiardopulo's Letter from Mersyna, addressed to Acting Consul Catoni at Aleppo on the 12th June, 1892.

DEPUIS l'arrivée de notre Vali, Hadji Izet Bey, le fanatisme est arrivé au comble; les Chrétiens en général, et les Arméniens en particulier, n'ont qu'à souffrir; chaque jour une nouvelle question est soulevée; dernièrement il a demandé pour lui être présentés les Firmans pour les églises et les écoles, en prohibant de faire les examens sans un ordre de Constantinople. Il a fermé presque tous les magasins des débitants d'alcool sous prétexte qu'ils sont près d'une Mosquée ou d'un cimetière, &c. Si un Musulman veut se venger d'un Chrétien il n'a qu'à présenter deux témoins comme quoi il a insulté la religion Musulmane, ou pour lèse-majesté, et sitôt cette personne est jetée dans les prisons. Celui qui joue le plus grand rôle c'est un certain Abdul-Cader Bagdati, membre du Conseil Administratif d'Adana, qui se trouve à la tête de quelques Mollahs. Ce monsieur avait un litige avec un des Notables Arméniens, très influent à Adana, un certain Garabet Galdacloglou, et comme il voyait qu'il perdrait le procès lui impute une calomnie, comme quoi il est membre d'un Comité; il fait télégraphier à Constantinople, et avant quelques jours l'ordre est venu de le

faire exiler à Saint-Jean d'Acre, ce qui a été fait la semaine dernière, sans que cet homme soit interrogé ou même lui donner le temps de se défendre.

Il y a des personnes entre les Musulmans qui s'adressent à des Arméniens en leur demandant de l'argent, et leur faisant connaître qu'en cas de refus ils se vengeraient, et de cette manière on réussit à tirer de l'argent. Si cet état de choses continue il y a à craindre pour la tranquillité publique, et je puis vous assurer que les Arméniens d'Adana sont trop loin de penser aux Comités ou autres affaires politiques.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) A. LYKIARDOPULO.

No. 68.

Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Consul Graves.—(Received at the Foreign Office, July 22.)

(No. 17.)
Sir,

Van, June 20, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to report that during the last eight or ten days there has been a very marked increase in crime in this vilayet.

A few days ago two Kurds were murdered near an Armenian village, named Sikkeh, about half-an-hour's distance from Van. A number of the Armenian villagers have been imprisoned on suspicion, though several circumstances would point to the perpetrators being Kurds. If such should turn out to be the case, the matter is devoid of any political importance; but there is a decided tendency on the part of officials here to prejudge the case against the Armenians, with a view to giving it a political colouring.

Two days ago an Armenian of Van was travelling by Karagunduz, on Archag Lake, six hours from Van, in company with a Kurd. The Kurd suddenly attacked his Armenian companion, inflicting a deep chest-wound with a dagger. Two other Kurds, who were a little in advance, rushed on the Armenian to kill him outright, but some peasants working in a field near at hand hearing his cries, rescued the Armenian, the three Kurds taking to flight. The Armenian has been brought to town, but the cause of the attempt is not yet known.

Three Mussulmans are reported to have been killed at Ghouk Ghedik, some six hours from Van, by Kurds. The matter has not yet been investigated.

I shall not fail to watch all three matters, and report on them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

No. 69.

Consul Graves to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, July 22.)

(No. 38.)
Sir,

Erzeroum, June 22, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 36 of the 15th instant, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that Zeki Pasha, the Mushir commanding the 4th Army Corps, arrived here on the 17th instant from Van, and on Sunday, the 19th instant, presided at the presentation of twenty-four regimental colours to the Kurkish Chiefs, who had assembled here from the Erzeroum and Bitlis Vilayets on behalf of the new Hamidiyyé regiments of irregular cavalry.

The whole available force of the Erzeroum garrison was paraded at about 4 P.M. outside the Kars Gate, when, after the Sultan's Firman had been read, the Chiefs, designated as honorary Colonels of the new force, in turn received their colours from the Mushir. There was then a march past of the regular troops, who were followed by deputations from the new Hamidiyyé regiments, varying from 40 to 120 men per regiment, and numbering about 1,500 in all. With the exception of some of the Chiefs, the Kurdish horsemen had made little or no attempt at uniformity in any respect, and the great majority of their horses were of very inferior quality. I remarked that most of them carried Martini and Berdan carbines, besides other very miscellaneous weapons, and that there were a large number of elderly men and very young boys in their ranks.

A similar presentation of fourteen colours took place at Van on the 10th instant,

as reported in Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice's despatch to me of the 11th June, duplicate copy of which I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure in No. 69.

Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Acting Consul Hampson.

Sir,

Van, June 11, 1892.

YESTERDAY Zeki Pasha, the Marshal of the 4th Army Corps, presented the colours to the Van Kurdish regiments. There were about a dozen regiments represented, each regiment being represented by not more than twenty horsemen, whose appearance in the march past was far from that of a trained body of cavalry, in spite of their having been put through a considerable amount of exercise for the occasion.

The Mushir (Marshal) said that forty full regiments of Kurds had been formed, which would give a body of some 20,000 cavalry, but I greatly doubt that even two-thirds of these can be regarded as available or effective. He also said that forty of the most capable Colonels and some 150 Captains would be selected from the regular army and sent to drill the Kurdish regiments.

With regard to my remark in despatch of the 31st May, that the Ottoman Government seemed to have an intention of giving a military organization to the Arab tribes, the Mushir informed me that such is the intention of the Government; that he had already been promised some regiments by the Shaanar, Aneze, and Tai Arabs, who partly belong to the district of the 4th Army Corps, and that next year it was intended that the 5th (Syria), 6th (Bagdad), and 7th (Yemen) Army Corps, in whose districts the Arabs are mostly found, should continue their enrolment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

No. 70.

Consul Graves to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, August 19.)

(No. 42.)
Sir,

Erzeroum, July 20, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that on Saturday last, the 16th instant, thirty-six field guns arrived at Erzeroum from Trebizond, and that eighteen more are expected shortly, while twenty-four have been taken to Erzingian. These guns have remained some time at Trebizond, the delay in forwarding them being occasioned by the state of the road, which had suffered greatly from the effects of floods at the end of the past winter, especially in the low-lying parts between Trebizond and Gumushhané. Sufficient repairs have been made to render the road passable for artillery, at least in dry weather, and I am told that no great difficulties were experienced in bringing the guns up.

Since the 8th June, 370 artillery horses have also arrived here from Trebizond, and 180 more are said to be expected. I am also informed that orders have been given to purchase on the spot a certain number of saddle-horses, but the local supply of suitable animals is very small at present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 71.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received August 19.)

(No. 255.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, August 13, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the appointment of Haidar Pasha, member of the Committee for the selection of officials, as Vali of Erzeroum appeared in the "Saadet" of the 7th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 72.

The Archbishop of Canterbury to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received August 19.)

My Lord, *Addington Park, Croydon, August 18, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge, with my best thanks, your Lordship's letter of the 9th instant, in which you communicate to me the Report of Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo that the twenty-two Zeitoun prisoners acquitted by the Court of Appeal have been at length set at liberty.

May I be allowed to take this opportunity of expressing to your Lordship my very grateful acknowledgments of the attention and favour with which your Lordship has invariably received communications from me on the subject of difficulties affecting the Christian sufferers in Armenia and Assyria, and of the good results which have ensued from your Lordship's powerful intervention.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ED. CANTUAR.

No. 73.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received August 29.)

(No. 268. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, August 24, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herein to your Lordship copy of a Reuter telegram, dated Washington, the 19th instant, which refers to the ill-treatment which has been inflicted on an American missionary in this country.

The facts of the case are briefly as follows:—

An American missionary of the name of Bartlet has been residing for some time at a place called Bourdour, in Asia Minor, which is situated on the mainland to the north of the Gulf of Adalia. He bought property at Bourdour, and commenced building operations upon it, with the intention of establishing a place of worship and a school there. Owing, however, to the spirit of fanaticism which prevailed amongst the inhabitants (chiefly Armenians), and to the hostile attitude assumed towards him by the Governor of the town, Mr. Bartlet was subjected to the most vexatious obstacles to the prosecution of his scheme. He was, moreover, called upon to sign a bond, to the effect that, in erecting the premises, he would on no account avail himself of them for the establishment either of a place of worship or of a school. Such a bond Mr. Bartlet refused to sign.

In the month of February last a settlement of Mr. Bartlet's case, which was strenuously taken up by Mr. Hirsch, the United States' Minister at this Court, was still in abeyance.

Mr. Hirsch, early in the course of this year, returned to his native country on leave of absence, since which time the affairs of the Legation have been carried on by a Chargé d'Affaires. The persecutions to which Mr. Bartlet was made a victim did not subside; workmen were prohibited from entering his grounds; and his wrongs culminated not long ago in certain ill-intentioned individuals setting fire to his house and destroying his property. His life and that of his wife and family were even threatened.

On these facts being brought to the notice of the United States' Government a feeling of indignation appears to have been aroused, and I understand, from a confidential source, that the United States' Chargé d'Affaires, acting under the instructions of his Government, repaired to the Sublime Porte yesterday, and handed in a demand couched in very peremptory terms, calling upon the Turkish Government for immediate redress to be made to Mr. Bartlet, failing which it would be incumbent on the United States' Government to consider the steps which they would have to take in order to enforce a compliance with their demands.

I understand that the paper which was handed into the Porte embodies demands to the following effect:—

1. That immediate protection, and also protection in the future, be given to Mr. Bartlet and his family, and that unconditional permission be granted to him to reconstruct his dwelling; that is to say, without any document having to be signed binding him not to establish either a place of worship or school in it.

2. That the persons who set fire to his premises should be pursued, captured, and punished in an exemplary manner.

3. That an adequate sum of money (I have heard it stated at a sum of 1,200*l.*) should be paid at once by the Turkish Government to that of the United States as an indemnity to Mr. Bartlet for expenses and losses incurred by him during the last twelve months.

4. That the Governor of Bourdour be reprimanded in a public manner for the culpable neglect he has displayed during his term of office in protecting foreigners, and permitting such disgraceful acts to be committed.

I may add that the Government of the United States appear to be thoroughly in earnest in this matter, and determined to see justice rendered to the American citizen. I cannot but help thinking that the Porte will lose no time in acceding to the wishes of the United States' Government, and I sincerely trust that such may prove to be the case.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure in No. 73.

Reuter Telegram, dated Washington, August 19, 1892.

LE Secrétaire d'État pour l'Extérieur a reçu du Chargé d'Affaires à Constantinople une dépêche concernant les mauvais traitements infligés aux missionnaires Américaines en Asie Mineure. Le Représentant des Etats-Unis a été chargé de demander réparation immédiate à la Sublime Porte. Deux navires de la guerre ont reçu l'ordre de se rendre sur les côtes de l'Asie Mineure.

No. 74.

Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Consul Graves.—(Received at the Foreign Office, September 2.)

(No. 22.)
Sir, *Van, July 27, 1892.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 6 of the 17th April last, I have the honour to report that, after many delays, sentence has at last been given in the case of Natanian Garabed Effendi and Avedis Effendi Bartevian, both of whom have been frequently mentioned in former despatches from this Vice-Consulate.

The former has been sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment, and the latter to ten years as accomplice to the former. Natanian Garabed Effendi and Avedis Effendi were originally charged with being the prime movers in—

1. The Choukghedik affair of 1889 (*vide* Mr. Devey's Confidential despatch of the 6th July, 1889), which created such a stir at the time.

2. In the affair of the "threatening anonymous letters" which formed the subject of Mr. Devey's despatch of the 14th June, 1891.

3. With having attempted to have the Van bazaars fired, with the intention of throwing the blame on the military, and thereby on their Commander, Hamdi Pasha, the opponent of the late Vali, Khalil Bey.

4. With having incited M. Portukalian, a former schoolmaster here, and now editor at Marseilles of the paper "L'Arménie," to found a patriotic club here at Van, and to teach sedition in his school, some seven years ago.

5. With being the author of the rescue of Ghazar, detailed in Mr. Devey's Confidential despatch of the 20th July, 1891.

As a result of the "interrogatory" a decision of "no case" was given on the first two charges. The last three were allowed, and upon them both prisoners have been found guilty and sentenced.

The whole affair seems to have taken place pursuant to instructions from Constantinople, and though Natanian and Avedis Effendis have repeatedly telegraphed to the Palace and the Sublime Porte, demanding a change of venue on the ground that they have no confidence in obtaining justice here, no reply has come to their telegrams. Avedis Effendi has made an application to adopt Islamism, seeming to have the notion that such a change of religion will better his case somehow.

The trial of and sentence on these two friends of the former Vali, coupled with the late return to Van of Ohannes Effendi Derboghosian and Galib Pasha Temir Oglou, two opponents whom the late Vali got sent to Constantinople, would seem to point to a reversal, inspired from the capital, of the policy of Khalil Bey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

No. 75.

Consul Eyres to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, September 2.)

(No. 24.)
Sir, *Damascus, August 2, 1892.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 18 of the 16th June, I have the honour to report, for your Excellency's information, that the population of the Hauran is in a state of ferment on account of the repeated attempts of the Local Government to enforce the "tapou" system on the land proprietors in that district. I understand that it is not so much that they object to the tapou system in itself as that they fear that it is the beginning of an attempt generally to deprive them of the practical independence they have hitherto enjoyed, and especially to introduce the conscription.

The result is that a considerable district in the Hauran is in a state of passive revolt. Seven large villages have been deserted, the inhabitants only returning by stealth by night to gather in their crops, and in several places quarrels have taken place with the soldiery, in one of which a Lieutenant of infantry was killed. The The authorities do not, however, desist from the attempt, though they appear to be working very slowly. Various small drafts of soldiers, amounting in all to 300 or 400 men, have lately been sent to the Hauran. It seems probable, however, that the resistance of the inhabitants will not be easily overcome, and that another expedition, such as was sent in 1890, may be necessary if the Government seriously intends to carry out its project.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

No. 76.

Consul Graves to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, September 2.)

(No. 43.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, July 26, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copy in duplicate of a despatch which I have received from the Acting British Consul at Diarbekir, reporting a raid by Kurds of the Khodj Ushaghi tribe upon the villages of Chemish Gezek, in Dersim.

The state of that district has been one of great lawlessness and disorder for some time past.

A serious encounter took place last summer between Kurdish tribesmen of Dersim and a detachment of Turkish troops, as reported in Mr. Hampson's despatch of the 22nd August, 1891, and subsequent despatches, after which the garrisons were reinforced, but no serious punitive measures were attempted, on account, it is said, of the lateness of the season.

It is satisfactory to observe that, on the present occasion, the gendarmerie appear to have acted with promptitude and energy in repulsing the raiders and recovering the booty, and the military precautions have been taken to prevent a repetition of disorder at Chemish Gezek.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure in No. 76.

Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian to Consul Graves.

Sir, *Kharput, July 18, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to call your attention once more to the state of affairs in Dersim, and to the outrages committed by the Kurds upon the peaceable and defenceless inhabitants of the villages of the Chemish Gezek district.

It might be stated that marauding and highway robbery are habitually practised by these daring Kurds, but occasionally they adopt the easier method of imposing taxes upon the villages rather than having the trouble of plundering them and disposing of the stolen goods. These taxes are levied in proportion to the means possessed by the inhabitants of the various villages, and collected periodically; and as long as they are paid regularly, the people are left unmolested, but when they stop paying, then their flocks, crops, property, and even their lives, are exposed to pillage and danger.

It appears that the inhabitants of the above-mentioned district refused lately to submit to these most unjust exactions, when a certain Ahmed, the Chief of a tribe called Khodj Ushaghi, exasperated at the manly courage exhibited thus by the villagers, made a raid, some three weeks ago, with about fifty followers upon the district, spreading devastation right and left and carrying off cattle and other movable property upon which he could lay hands. But in one village he was confronted by the inhabitants, and a force of gendarmerie from a station close by hastened to the assistance of the former, when a fight ensued, in which two of the bandits were, I am told, mortally wounded, the cattle and other property were recaptured and restored to the owners, but the Kurds retired to their mountain fastnesses. The people, apprehensive of graver consequences, applied to the Government, begging that effective measures might be taken to prevent the recurrence of the raid, whereupon one battalion of infantry and two batteries of artillery were at once dispatched to the raid district.

As to the antecedents of Ahmed and his followers, I beg to refer you to one of my Confidential despatches of the 10th August, 1891, in which a detailed account is given. I need hardly repeat what I stated in my former despatch, that the administrative mechanism established for so many years in the Dersim mountains has to be reorganized so as to meet the requirements of the locality and people; for the influence of the authorities now is not felt, I may state, a mile's distance from centres of the Government, although from four to seven battalions of troops have been stationed there for the last fifteen years. The Kurds are a fine and intelligent race, but extremely poor. There not being sufficient arable land for cultivation, and having, rightly or wrongly, no confidence in the local authorities, they do not dare to leave their mountain homes in order to pursue a lawful calling and thus gain their livelihood; but being compelled by the instinct of want, they commit all sorts of depredations, and thus become the terror of the districts surrounding the mountains. Taking into consideration all these circumstances, it is for the Government to consider what sort of administration is needed in order to subdue this turbulent people and insure the security and peace of the region.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN.

No. 77.

Consul Graves to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, September 2.)

(No. 44.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, August 4, 1892.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 39 of the 29th June, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copy in duplicate of a despatch which I have

received from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice, reporting further on various crimes of violence committed recently in the Van Vilayet.

From Mr. Fitzmaurice's further inquiries it would appear as if, in the two more serious affairs reported from Sikkeh and Chouk Ghedik, the Kurds who were killed fell victims to their own lawlessness. Affrays such as those alluded to, and isolated cases of cattle-lifting, have at all times been only too frequent in Kurdistan, and by comparison with former years it can hardly be said that the state of the district is worse than or even so bad as usual.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure in No. 77.

Acting Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice to Consul Graves.

Van, July 27, 1892.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatches of the 20th and 21st ultimo, I have the honour to report as follows on the matters mentioned therein:—

The murderers of the two Kurds killed near the Armenian village of Sikkeh have not yet been discovered. Some eighteen Armenians of the village have been in prison during the last month until some three days ago, when fourteen of them were released on bail, no incriminating evidence having been brought against them.

The view first entertained in official circles here was that the Armenian villagers were the murderers; when no proof of this seemed forthcoming, it was maintained that the murder, together with two or three others lately committed here, were the work of a band of Armenians, the partizans of Nafanian Garabed Effendi, who were scouring the country, hiding about in Armenian monasteries and villages, and committing these crimes that they might be reported to European papers and give the idea that this vilayet was in a state of disorder. The Government here claimed to suspect that the Sikkeh villagers, though not, perhaps, the perpetrators of the crime, knew who the perpetrators were. In my opinion, if the truth is ever known, the murder will turn out to be the result of a private quarrel between some Kurds.

With regard to the Armenian wounded at Karagunduz, he has been conveyed to this town, and is still in a precarious state from his chest-wound. He declares he knows his assailant well, but prays that the matter may be hushed up, as he fears the subsequent vengeance of the Kurd's comrades if he should have him brought to justice. His assailant has fled, and no traces of him are forthcoming.

The report of three Mussulmans killed at Chouk Ghedik originated in an attack by a band of Kurds on the Bashkaleh post. The zaptiehs escorting the post, after firing some fifty rounds, succeeded in killing two of the Kurdish horses and one of the Kurds, whereupon the rest of the band retreated into the hills.

The sheep mentioned in my despatch of the 21st June as having been raided from Sivan village and restored through the exertions of a Shemsiki Agha, were a few days later again carried off by another band of Kurds, and, though zaptiehs have been sent in pursuit, have not been recovered.

The cattle carried off by Kurds from Evevek village have been restored.

The Persian Consul of Bashkaleh has lately been nominated Consul at Van, and has already arrived. He informed me that he had been robbed on the Turkish side of the border by some Kurds, who then fled to Persia. It has not yet been ascertained whether the Kurds were Persian or Turkish.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GERALD FITZMAURICE.

No. 78.

Consul Graves to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, September 2.)

(No. 48. Confidential.)

Erzeroum, August 12, 1892.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Vali of Erzeroum, his Excellency Hassan Hairi Pasha, has been dismissed, and Haidar Pasha appointed Vali in his place.

Hassan Hairi Pasha, who is a General of Division, was appointed Vali in the summer of 1890. His rough manners and disregard of forms have caused a great deal of friction in his dealings with his subordinates, as well as with the foreign Consulates at Erzeroum, with the exception of Her Britannic Majesty's Consulate. He was also unfortunate in the selection of some of his Councillors. At the same time, he has enjoyed a reputation for energy and integrity, and it was hoped that with more extended experience of civil administration he might develop superior capacities for governing.

His fall is attributed partly to official complaints recently forwarded to Constantinople by the Cadi and Public Prosecutor of Erzeroum, but mainly to the ill-concealed hostility which existed between him and the Mushir Zekki Pasha, commanding the 4th Army Corps, who possesses strong Palace influence. This enmity arose chiefly from their divergence of opinion on the subject of the organization of the Hamidiyyé regiments, the Vali being, it is said, strongly opposed to the arming of the Kurdish tribes, as a measure which is likely to render the government of Kurdistan, if possible, a more difficult task than it has hitherto proved.

Of the newly-appointed Vaili, Haidar Pasha, little is known here, except that he has filled the posts of Mutessarif at Kaiserieh and Broussa, and that of late he has been a member of the Intihah Commission for the selection of civil functionaries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 79.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received September 2.)

(No. 261. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, August 18, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of two despatches from Her Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Beyrout; in the former of these Mr. Hallward gives an interesting account of a conversation he had with Ismail Kemal Bey, the retiring Vali of Beyrout, in which his Excellency expressed his views very freely on the policy, external and internal, of Turkey. In the latter Mr. Hallward reports the arrival of Khalid Bey, the new Governor-General.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 79.

Acting Consul-General Hallward to Sir Clare Ford.

(Very Confidential.)

Sir,

Beyrout, August 1, 1892.

IN a conversation I had with Ismail Kemal Bey, the late Vali, the day before his departure, his Excellency expressed his views to me on the internal and external policy of the Turkish Government with a frankness which is not common among Turkish officials. I ought, perhaps, to mention that his Excellency was banished from Constantinople for some years under suspicion of having been concerned in the dethronement of the Sultan Abdul Aziz, a charge which he told me was untrue.

Before starting for Beyrout he had, so he informed me, a long interview with the Sultan, in which he told His Majesty that unless he had complete confidence in him he would rather not take office at all; that his own view of what Turkey's policy ought to be was quite different from that which had prevailed of late years; England, he said, was the one Power really interested in the maintenance of Turkey, so long as the latter met her advances in a friendly spirit, but that England could not tolerate the existence of a hostile Turkey. There was only one question at present which presented any obstacle to friendly relations between the two Powers, viz., that of Egypt, but he did not consider that an insuperable one. What England wanted was not to increase her territory, but to strengthen the bonds between her various possessions, and for that purpose Egypt was of vital importance, and it would have been foolish of England to let that country fall into hostile hands. The object of Turkish

policy ought, therefore, to be to come to some arrangement by which, while the Sultan's sovereign rights were acknowledged, a right of way should be secured to the English through Egypt to India.

His Excellency admitted that at present there was little in the policy of the Turkish Government, either domestic or foreign, to encourage English support; in fact he described that policy as "ruinous," and said that all England could do was to wait and hope for a change. The system of universal centralization in the hands of one man paralyzed the Administration, there being no regular careers for officials, and no proper system of control of the lower officials by the higher; thus minor officials like Kaimakams, and even Mudirs, are rather encouraged to correspond direct with the Palace instead of through the regular channels, and a spirit of insubordination was fostered, which tied the hands of the Valis; in fact, he described the present government as "capricious" rather than systematic or equitable.

I have ventured to trouble your Excellency at some length with Kemal Bey's views, as he is said to be called to fill an important post, and I believe the above to have been a sincere expression of his sentiments towards England, his words having been fully borne out by the manner in which he has acted towards this Consulate and in English affairs in general during his term of office here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

Inclosure 2 in No. 79.

Acting Consul-General Hallward to Sir Clare Ford.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Beyrout, August 2, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to report that his Excellency Ismail Kemal Bey, ex-Vali of Beyrout, left on the 30th ultimo for Constantinople, and that his successor, Khalid Bey, arrived here the next day.

Up to the time of his departure the late Vali had failed to discover, in spite of repeated inquiries from his friends at Constantinople, what was the "important post" for which he was told by the Grand Vizier's telegram that he was destined.

Notwithstanding his short stay here, amounting to barely seven months, Ismail Kemal Bey succeeded in making himself very generally popular, especially with the Christians, towards whom he evinced a decidedly friendly spirit.

He is universally admitted to have been by far the most enlightened and least fanatical Governor Beyrout has seen, and he showed a most praiseworthy energy in setting on foot various schemes for the improvement of the town. Among these schemes was one for running two new streets through the middle of the old part of the town, which consists of a labyrinth of dark narrow streets, containing chiefly small shops and a few dwelling-houses inhabited by poor Moslems.

The scheme involved the demolition of a large number of these houses, and on that account roused considerable opposition on the part of the more fanatical Moslems, who thought it would be detrimental to the interests of the poor class of their co-religionists, though as a matter of fact the expropriation was carried out on a liberal scale. The plan was approved at Constantinople, and the Municipality had completed the estimation of the property concerned, and raised the necessary sum of money, before the departure of the late Vali; nothing therefore remained but to carry out the work, but the first act of the new Vali has been to issue orders stopping the work altogether, so that it is evident he must have received special instructions to that effect from Constantinople.

This affair, rousing as it did a certain amount of ill-feeling among the Moslems, was probably one among other causes which contributed to the late Vali's removal. His want of fanaticism, and friendliness to foreigners, coupled with his energy and ability, may also have operated in the same direction, as it is well known that a combination of these qualities is no passport to Imperial favour for a Syrian Governor.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 80.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received September 2.)

(No. 270.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, August 25, 1892.*

IN transmitting to your Lordship the accompanying copy of a despatch, together with its inclosures, which I have received from Mr. Consul Graves, dated Erzeroum, the 12th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that ever since my first arrival in this country I have never allowed an opportunity to escape me of impressing upon the Imperial Government the paramount necessity of using the greatest judgment and precaution in the selection of Turkish Governors and officials in Asia Minor, particularly in those localities where Christian populations abound. I have every reason to hope that my injunctions have not been without avail, as I gather from the inclosure in Consul Graves' despatch.

As regards the unfortunate prisoners at Kharput, I am taking steps to obtain, if possible, that their trial be expedited.

On the 31st instant the anniversary of the Sultan's accession to the Throne will be celebrated, but it would be impossible to approach the Palace with a view to clemency being exercised in favour of these prisoners until they had actually undergone their trial.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 80.

Consul Graves to Sir Clare Ford.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, August 12, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copy, in duplicate, of a Confidential despatch which I have received from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian on the subject of the continued detention in the Kharput prison of some forty Armenians of Arabkir and Egin who are accused of various political offences, and have not been put upon their trial.

Mr. Boyajian also reports that orders have been received from Constantinople that no further arrests of Armenians on political charges for trifling causes are to be made, and that the judicial authorities seem disposed to act upon these instructions. It is therefore to be hoped that they may also be instructed to deal with the cases of those previously arrested in the same spirit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 80.

Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian to Consul Graves.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Kharput, July 30, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that, as far as I have been able to ascertain, there are about forty Armenians, all, with but few exceptions, belonging to the Arabkir and Egin districts, who have been confined for the last eight or ten months, without being tried, in the prison of this place, on the charge of treason or of inciting others to rise against the Government.

In connection with the above statement, I must not omit to mention that six other men, accused of committing robbery for political purposes, have been sent to the capital; three of these, however, I am told, were subsequently acquitted of the charge, and, in addition to these, four respectable merchants were, without examination (at least nothing is known as to the nature of the accusation brought against them), exiled to Kastamboul, where one of them died soon after his arrival, and another, I am told, from excessive grief, became insane. All these were from Arabkir.

The cause of these summary arrests may be traced to the state of things in Arabkir last year, which were then reported by me. The affair, as was natural, gave the Government a just and substantial cause for suspicion, and, though the prime movers had been sent away, yet the authorities had reason to think that some

contaminated and hot-headed young Armenians still remained there; hence the vigilance of officials, and the consequent arrest of suspected persons.

Whilst the slightest doubt cannot be entertained as to the authorities possessing documentary and other evidence with regard to some of the accused being implicated in political offences, yet I may state that the majority of those imprisoned, if put upon their trial, will be able to prove their innocence, for most of them have been arrested either for no cause at all or very trifling ones, such as having been found to possess books and songs the circulation of which has been prohibited of late, though probably the possessors are unaware of the fact; others for having twelve or thirteen years ago written essays bringing to mind the deeds of bravery of the Armenians in time past; or others, again, for writing letters on business matters which some zealous officials took upon themselves to interpret as having a secret meaning.

I have to remark that the arrest of so many persons, through the excessive zeal and other obvious motives of the inferior officials, has created consternation and a feeling of insecurity among the Armenians of these districts, and presented an opportunity to a class of unprincipled men, most of them, I regret to state, being Armenians, to turn informers and false accusers, thereby making a good traffic. I feel, however, satisfaction in stating that this fact has not escaped the notice of the Central Government, as I learn that an Imperial Circular Order has been lately issued, calling the attention of the Governors-General to this state of affairs, and enjoining that no Armenian shall hereafter be arrested for trifling causes as political offenders, and it is hoped that His Imperial Majesty's command will have the desired effect, as I gather that the President and the Public Prosecutor of the recently-established Court of Appeal at this place seem decidedly inclined to act upon the said order.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN.

No. 81.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received September 2.*)

(No. 275.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, August 28, 1892.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 270 of the 25th instant, on the subject of the forty Armenians belonging to the districts of Arabkir and Egin, who have been confined on a charge of treason for the last eight or ten months at Kharput without having undergone any sort of trial, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I have interested myself on their behalf, and I received yesterday a direct promise from the Grand Vizier to the effect that his Highness will cause the necessary orders to be sent to the Judicial authorities at that place to expedite the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 82.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received September 2.*)

(No. 276. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, August 28, 1892.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 268, Confidential, of the 24th instant, on the subject of the outrage which was perpetrated on an American missionary in Asia Minor named Bartlet, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I understand instructions have been sent to the Governor-General of the vilayet to proceed at once to the locality where the incident took place, in order to institute on the spot a stringent inquiry into the whole circumstances of the case, and of reporting fully on the matter to the Sublime Porte.

The Grand Vizier is perfectly ready and willing to give the subject every consideration, but his Highness deeply regrets the hasty action which appears to have been taken respecting it by the United States' Legation here.

His Highness considers that the incident might very properly have been treated in a calm and diplomatic manner, instead of resorting at once to the alternative of recommending extreme measures.

I entertain every hope that the matter will eventually be amicably settled.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 83.

The Earl of Rosebery to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 191.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, September 15, 1892.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 270 of the 25th ultimo, inclosing reports from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum and the Acting British Vice-Consul at Kharput on the subject of the Armenians detained at the latter place on political charges.

I have learnt with satisfaction the issue of a Circular Order of the Turkish Government calling upon the Governors of provinces to see that henceforth no Armenians are arrested as political offenders for trifling causes; a measure which is no doubt to a great extent due to your efforts on behalf of the populations of Asia Minor as reported in the above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROSEBERY

No. 84.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received September 16.*)

(No. 284. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, September 12, 1892.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 276 of the 28th ultimo, on the subject of the ill-treatment of an American missionary named Bartlett at a place called Bourdour, in Asia Minor, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the affair has been settled to the entire satisfaction of Mr. Newberry, the United States' Chargé d'Affaires at this Court.

The sum of 350*l.* in gold has been paid by the Porte into Mr. Newberry's hands, to be held by him for the benefit of Mr. Bartlett in defraying the expenses which will be incurred in building a new house, his old one having been burnt down by incendiaries, who appear to have been Armenians.

In addition, a sum of 250*l.* in gold has been paid to Mr. Newberry as an indemnity for the ill-treatment to which his countryman had been exposed, and particularly in consequence of the outrage by stoning to which he had been subjected.

Moreover, five individuals have been arrested at Bourdour on a charge of being implicated in the burning of Mr. Bartlett's premises; of the high Turkish officials at Bourdour, one has been summarily dismissed, and the other severely reprimanded, for connivance in the outrage.

Mr. Bartlett will also be permitted to reconstruct his dwelling without being hampered by conditions; in other words, by his not having to sign any document which would bind him not to establish either a school or place of worship on his premises.

Thus the United States' Government may be said to have had their own way "along the whole line."

I know that Mr. Newberry has been very firm in the matter, which, in the ultimate stage of its negotiation, was taken out of Said Pasha's hands, and was directly dealt with by the Grand Vizier and the Sultan, both of whom were made aware of the fact that, without prompt action were taken to redress Mr. Bartlett's wrongs, the question might be further complicated by the appearance in Turkish waters (at Smyrna and the Gulf of Adalia) of United States' ships of war, with a view to emphasizing the position taken up in the matter by the United States' Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 85.

Statement respecting the Persecutions against the Armenians in Cilicia.—(*Communicated to Foreign Office, September 29, 1892.*)

PERSECUTION against the poor for taxation are exceedingly hard and unbearable. If an Armenian is so poor that he is unable to give his tax at once the Government puts him in prison, and unmercifully refuses to give him sufficient food, and therefore causes him to be ill, and after three or four weeks, by compulsion, sells his property, even his cups and mats, at a very low price, and takes the money to pay his debt to Government, leaving the poor in a miserable condition. The only way to be saved from this awful condition is to deny Christianity and become Moslem.

2. Persecution for false accusation against the Christianity :—

(1.) The Bishop of Zaitoun, with some of his suffragans, has been in prison for the last two years, and has lately been sentenced to a life imprisonment; and one of his priests, whose name is Ghevont, has been sentenced to death. The cause of sentence is because Bishop refused to deliver up to the Government some Armenians, supposed by the Government to be rebellious, saying that he, being himself a Bishop, is unable to arrest them, but he said Government is strong enough to arrest them.

(2.) The Bishop of Adana, a few months ago, was exiled, and his present place nobody knows, except the Turkish Government. The cause of exile is simply that he talked with two English messengers forwarded from his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury and his Lordship the Bishop of Salisbury for a religious purpose, namely, to confer with the Armenian Bishops in Cilicia about the demands of the Armenian clergy.

(3.) The Bishop of Fernouz, a few months ago, was thrown into prison by a fraud. The Government was anxious to accuse the Bishop of posing a soldier, and having obtained his Lordship's photograph through a private source, and having painted upon it the uniform of a General and rephotographied it, then took the false picture to the Bishop and brought the accusation against him. He answered to his accusers, "The face is certainly mine, but the clothes are not."

(4.) The Prelate (Canon) of Plagin is in prison in Adana because he had baptized a Turkish woman about four years ago, although she returned to Mahommedanism a year after her baptism.

(5.) When the Government has no accusation to bring against an Armenian the policemen are instructed to forge treasonable letters and secretly slip them into the pockets of unsuspecting Armenians whom they know by name as they walk along the streets; they then accuse the innocent men of treason, and cast them into prison without a trial.

(6.) In the case of a law-suit between a Christian and a Turk there is no hope of justice to the Christian, but it is always given in favour of the Turk.

(7.) The Government, after falsely accusing many Armenians and keeping them in prison for two or three months, release them without further question upon receiving a sufficiently large bribe. During this year, it is reported that Government took from Marash alone 3,000*l.* as bribes.

3. Persecution by causing Christianity to be openly despised in Cilicia by—

(1.) Keeping the Turkish soldiers in the church contrary to the laws of the Armenian Holy Church.

(2.) Not allowing the Armenian Christians to help their poor.

(3.) Keeping the good Christians out of their Government offices. The present Vali of Adana, as soon as he got his post, put out all the Christian servants from his Palace, and by this act he stirred up all the Turk's animosity against the Christians, and Christians against the Turks.

(4.) Lastly, there is at present no security of life at all, so that, in some places, Christians, on Sundays, feel obliged to take their pistols with them, fearing lest the Turks should attack the church when Armenians attend the service, and there is no permission for Armenians to leave Turkey for Europe and America, and the correspondence with each other is very limited and dangerous.

The English Ambassador is most kind in doing what he can for the Armenians; but, as a rule, when he interferes in any persecution of the Turkish Vali the Government removes the Vali, but sends in his place a more cruel one, on the pretext that

the Armenians cannot get on with their best and most lenient officers, and so, notwithstanding the good intentions of England on behalf of the oppressed Armenians, their condition becomes worse rather than better by the present course of action. These acts of cruelty and injustice by the Turkish Government are tending to drive the Armenians to despair, and soon to take up arms against their oppressors.

The above applies to Armenia proper as well as Cilicia.

No. 86.

The Archbishops of Zeithoun and Marache to Mr. Gladstone.—(*Received at the Foreign Office, October 6.*)

[Printed literally.]

Prison d'Alep, ce 5 (17) Août, 1892.

Excellence,

NOUS vous félicitons en nous félicitant nous-mêmes, ainsi que l'humanité entière pour le succès de l'étendard libéral et l'éclatante victoire que ses champions viennent d'obtenir.

Quoique les convenances nous imposent le devoir de ne point venir troubler votre bonheur en vous causant des émotions qui seraient déplacées en ce moment-ci, notre triste état nous y contraint; car la malheureuse situation que notre mauvais destin et la direction du Gouvernement Britannique nous ont créée, nous ont conduits dans les prisons Ottomanes, qui sont de véritables tombeaux de vivants où chaque heure de résidence vaut une année de souffrance.

Votre bonté naturelle, votre humanité universellement connue, nous encouragent à vous supplier de vouloir bien nous accorder un petit moment pour daigner lire attentivement notre présent rapport et pour vous occuper de nous et nous tirer de ce gouffre dans lequel les fautes politiques nous ont jetés.

Votre Excellence connaît sans doute que les Arméniens habitant l'Empire Ottoman ont vécu pendant plusieurs siècles comme des brebis errantes dans des steppes arides, pleins de loups affamés; des troupeaux ne trouvant pour vivre qu'un peu d'herbe sèche et bien heureux encore quand ils en trouvent, habitués à supporter la faim quand ils n'en trouvent pas; affectant de paraître insensibles aux ravages que les loups font toujours parmi eux; existence à laquelle le temps les a tellement familiarisés qu'ils ont fini par la croire naturelle.

Pendant que les Arméniens étaient presque résignés à cet état qui était devenu habituel, tout en se contentant des adoucissements que de temps en temps la Porte Ottomane faisait semblant de leur accorder pour les protéger contre l'avidité et la tyrannie de ses fonctionnaires, paraissant surveiller quelquefois la conduite de ces derniers voilà que l'Angleterre, à la suite de la guerre Turco-Russe, se soulève pour demander l'amélioration de la situation des Arméniens, en faisant comprendre à ces derniers, que leur infortune n'était pas naturelle, ce qui leur a ouvert les yeux, éveillant en eux l'espoir d'un avenir meilleur, leur faisant sentir la réalité de leur malheur et créant en eux des passions politiques et des sentiments nationaux; manière qui les a rendus exécrables aux yeux de Sa Majesté bien clémente par nature, mais abusée par ses favoris, tel que les Dervish et les Ridvan, attirant sur eux par ce fait de nombreuses calamités, parmi lesquelles extrême acharnement de leurs voisins Kurdes d'un côté et de l'autre l'ambition cupide des fonctionnaires, qui se donnaient l'âpre plaisir de leur faire supporter toute sorte d'oppressions et d'avanies indescriptibles, en les traitant comme des esclaves dans un pays nouvellement conquis par des barbares.

Votre Excellence connait que parmi les pays exclusivement habités par des Arméniens, ne se trouvent dans le Vilayet d'Alep, que nos malheureuses montagnés de Zeithoun, et que la question des améliorations en Arménie, proposée et acceptée par les Puissances Européennes, fut faite en son nom en 1878-1879. Tous les Valis, les Mutessarifs, et les Caïmcams qui se sont succédés sur Alep, Marache, et Zeithoun, ont obtenu des grades, des décorations, et des avancements en proportion de l'acharnement qu'ils ont mis à persécuter les pauvres Arméniens de Zeithoun, sauf le Vali actuel Arif Pacha qui a surpassé ses devanciers dans l'exécution de ses hautes œuvres, ne s'inquiétant ni de grades, ni de décorations, mais visant à l'or et ne pensant qu'à la rapacité et l'agglomération des biens, malgré la pauvreté des habitants; il sert en même temps la politique et les intérêts de ses deux protecteurs à Constantinople

qui sont Ridvan Pacha, chef de Municipalité (Schéhr Emini), et Dervish Pacha, un maréchal favori du Palais.

Dès son arrivée à Alep comme Gouverneur—il y a environ deux années et demie—Arif Pacha s'est rendu à Marache, chef-lieu de la commune de Zeïthoun, et s'est mis, avec Saleh Pacha ex-Mutessarif de Marache, à chercher les plans d'un mouvement de révolte à Zeïthoun; c'est là qu'ils ont dressé le programme de la tragi-comédie que nous allons décrire ci-après.

Première Scène.—Destituer le Caïmacam (d'alors) de Zeïthoun, brave et digne homme, le remplacer par le fameux scélérat Kadry Bey, une franche canaille, de Marache; gracier six véritables bandits de la montagne, leur accorder la liberté pour continuer leurs exploits au détriment des habitants et leur donner des bonifications officielles en argent à titre d'encouragement; mais cela n'ayant pas été suffisant pour constituer des troubles importants, on a eu recours à la—

Deuxième Scène.—Faire un massacre d'innocents, en Hérode moderne, de 55[illegible] enfants âgés de 2 à 10 ans, tous empoisonnés dans le vaccin distribué gratuitement, selon l'usage du pays, par le pharmacien municipal du Gouvernement; ces pauvres créatures ont été enlevées à la tendresse de leur mère, dans l'espace de cinq à dix jours, sur une population de 5,000 personnes; toutes ces victimes sont des garçons, les filles ayant été épargnées. Sous prétexte de collectionner les impôts arriérés on faisait jeter sans miséricorde les pauvres paysans dans les cachots, les enlevant à leurs travaux de récolte et les fustigeant si violemment que plusieurs parmi eux en sont morts.

Dans cette intervalle on a arrêté et conduit à la prison de Marache, tout en accablant de coups et en maltraitant de toutes les manières, M. le Professeur Sempad Pirad, le seul poète du pays, un homme jeune, intelligent et instruit, unanimement aimé par ses contemporains et qui venait après une absence de vingt ans voir ses vieux parents qu'il avait quittés depuis son entrée à l'école à l'âge de 9 ans; ce pauvre monsieur fut arrêté avant même d'entrer dans le territoire de la montagne, traité en vagabond, malgré qu'il était accompagné de sa jeune dame, qui était dans une position intéressante et de ses deux petits garçons; on leur a fait cruellement subir, entre autre misère, la faim qui les a tourmentés pendant trente-six heures continuelles sans qu'on ait la charité d'étancher la soif des pauvres enfants pendant toute la route d'Albistan à Marache.

On a également arrêté le Père Ghévond, prêtre de Marache, étant, par ordre de son supérieur en mission à Bayas, bourgade distante de six journées de Zeïthoun; il a été pris dans sa propre maison avec une jeune religieuse de ses parents, et mis en prison, tandis qu'elle s'y traîne en compagnie des femmes de mauvaise vie, quand le frère de la pauvre religieuse arrêté en même temps qu'elle, gémit au fond de son cachot, sans qu'on daigne jusqu'à présent lui dire quel est son crime et sans aucune formalité légale-turque; et, par ce fait, la famille du malheureux prêtre, composée de douze personnes, se trouve sans soutien, n'ayant personne pour lui donner même le pain quotidien. Tout cela n'a pas été suffisant pour éclater des désordres de rébellion; on a passé alors à la—

Troisième Scène.—On a fait assassiner par les bandits, lâchés jadis par eux, un pauvre gendarme nommé Osman; on a prétendu ensuite que le nouveau et méchant Caïmacam Kadry Bey a été obligé de déserter sa résidence, n'y pouvant plus tenir, on a fait ensuite tirer sur la ville 18,000 cartouches, d'après les statistiques, ce qui a fait plusieurs victimes parmi les habitants—hommes, femmes, et enfants. On a fait ensuite saccager par les troupes et livrer au feu et au feu cinq villages Arméniens et deux villages Turcs, et, alors, grâce à leurs manœuvres diaboliques, ils sont parvenus à donner aux troubles de Zeïthoun une couleur de révolte.

Alors, Arif Pacha commence à faire valoir les jolis services qu'il a rendus au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, en pacifiant soi-disant le pays révolté; ce qui lui a valu une bonne note vis-à-vis du Palais pour son protecteur Dervish Pacha, un grade de Pacha pour son autre protecteur Ridvan, et un avenir sûr et beautif pour sa propre bourse; mais malheureusement pour Arif Pacha et grâce à la probité et droiture de Mahmout Ali Pacha, Général de Brigade, Président de la Commission d'Enquête désignée par l'ordre de Sa Majesté le Sultan, Arif Pacha n'a pas pu complètement achever la tragédie telle qu'il avait combinée; furieux de n'avoir pas pu tirer de cette affaire les bénéfices qu'il en espérait avoir, il se venge de toutes les personnes qui ont causé par leurs plaintes et leurs réclamations la formation de cette Commission d'Enquête et la destitution de son complice Saleh Pacha, ex-Mutessarif de Marache, qu'il a maintenu dans ses fonctions par ses propres ordres pendant trois mois, malgré la volonté de Sa Majesté Impériale, qui avait bien voulu

ordonner la destitution de ce tyran; pendant le maintien de Saleh Pacha dans les trois mois supplémentaires, Arif Pacha a pu faire transporter la scène à Alep, où il exerce une influence directe sur la soi-disant justice ("rallyé"); c'est alors que par la main de la Cour d'Assises d'Alep—pardon! j'aurais dû l'appeler réunion de joaillliers et de bouriveaux—il a pu condamner l'un de nous, le soussigné Garabed, Archevêque de Zeïthoun, à perpétuité dans une forteresse, et jeter au fond d'un cachot l'autre soussigné, Nierghos, Archevêque de Marache; condamné à la peine de mort le susdit Père Ghévonte, tout en gardant sa religieuse parente avec les prostituées; condamner aussi à cinq ans dans une forteresse le susdit M. le Professeur Sempad; condamner sept autres Zeïthouniens à la peine de mort, et dix autres au travaux forcés à perpétuité, un autre à dix ans, quatre autres à huit ans, et dix-huit autres à cinq ans d'emprisonnement; ajoutons à cela huit autres martyrs tués en prison par de mauvais traitements; total, cinquante et une personnes, victimes de l'ambition et de l'intrigue du Vali d'Alep.

Grâce à ses systèmes de terrification, il parvint à tirer ses profits des acquittés qui ont pu se faire rançonner après avoir subi l'emprisonnement et la misère pendant des mois et des années, quoiqu'ils fussent réellement aussi innocents que les condamnés, et, même, d'après les fausses accusations et les preuves factices, plus coupables encore, et, par conséquence, qu'ils devraient mériter de plus graves punitions.

Parmi les prisonniers qu'il acquitta moyennant espèces on compte:—

	Louis d'or.
M. A. Galvanessian	120
M. K. Murganian	50
M. M. Andréassian	70
M. G. Parthenian	60
M. A. Bozian	20
M. P. Azarian	10
M. M. Thozlian	6
Somme versée à Arif Pacha par ces prisonniers acquittés et retenus en prison pendant trois mois, malgré les ordres reçus pour leur élargissement, qui n'a eu lieu qu'après le versement de cette somme	70
Total des sommes prises aux acquittés	406

Parmi les Arméniens de Marache on compte nombre de suspects, d'après lui, ou plutôt des personnes riches et aisées, desquelles il a pu extirper des sommes considérables par la terreur et les menaces; ce sont:—

	Louis d'or.
M. R. Berbakian	800
M. G. Bilesikdjian et Cie.	188
M. G. Tchorbadjian et Cie.	170
M. R. Mouradian	69
M. le Prêtre Père Ghévonte de Marache, et A. Tchorbadjian, Membre du Conseil-Général de la Ville, et Cie.	600
	1,718
Total des sommes versées par les acquittés	406
Somme encaissée jusqu'à présent	2,124

Il faut ajouter à cela ce qu'il reçoit journellement des Arméniens qu'il fait venir, et qui connaissent déjà la manière de s'y prendre pour ne pas rester ni en prison ni s'arrêter à Alep; cette manière consiste à aller trouver le Juif d'Arif Pacha, lui verser une somme convenue, et partir sans avoir affaire à personne.

La question de Zeïthoun, arrivée à ce point, n'a eu pour d'autre conséquence que de faire obtenir le grade de Vizir à Ridvan Bey, et de faire entrer quelques livres dans la poche d'Arif Pacha. Quant au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Impériale, il n'a eu pour toute conséquence que l'enhardissement des vrais bandits errants dans les montagnes, et peut-être, la formation de nouvelles bandes, grâce à la sotte conduite des fonctionnaires.

Nous venons supplier donc votre Excellence, au nom de la liberté et de l'humanité, de vouloir faire parvenir nos cris plaintifs aux pieds du trône de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, notre Seigneur et Maître, et de lui faire comprendre la véritable situation des Zeïthouniens, en traçant les lignes d'une conduite sage et clémente, que les circonstances commandent pour la pacification de ce pays, dont le moyen le plus efficace et le plus radical est de vouloir bien lui donner, au plus tôt possible, un Vali (d'Alep) sage, homête, éclairé, et, surtout, désintéressé.

Nous Soussignés, serviteurs persécutés de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ, prions le Très-Haut de répandre Ses grâces sur votre auguste personne, de la préserver de tout malheur, pour le bonheur de l'humanité et l'honneur de l'Angleterre et la gloire Britannique.

Daignez, &c.
Archevêque de Zeithoun,
(Sceau.) (Signé) GARABED KÉTEHÉYANTZ.
Archevêque de Marache,
(Sceau.) (Signé) NICOGHOS TAVTIANTZ.

No. 87.

M. Minasse Tchéraz to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received October 11.)

M. le Ministre, *Londres*, 33, *De Vere Gardens, ce* 11 *Octobre*, 1892.

JE viens de recevoir, du cachot central d'Alep, deux importants documents, signés et scellés par Mgr. Garabed, Archevêque de Zeytoun, Mgr. Nigoghos, Archevêque de Marash, et Der Ghazar, prêtre Zeytounien, tous les trois emprisonnés par les Turcs comme fauteurs de troubles à Zeytoun. Ils réfutent les accusations qui pèsent sur eux et demandent qu'ils soient remis en liberté ou au moins, que leur procès soit transféré à Constantinople. Ils formulent à leur tour de graves accusations contre les autorités Turques, auxquelles ils reprochent aussi la mort de 554 enfants à Zeytoun; ils réclament une enquête par une Commission formée d'un Anglais et d'un Turc. Un de ces documents, rédigé en Français, est destiné à M. le Premier Ministre, à qui je me suis empressé de l'envoyer hier; l'autre, rédigé en Arménien, est destiné à l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté Britannique à Constantinople; et je prends la liberté de le transmettre ci-joint à votre Seigneurie, en la priant de prendre en main la cause de ces malheureux victimes de la négligence de la Porte à améliorer le sort de ses sujets Arméniens, malgré ses triples engagements contractés dans les Traités de San Stéfano et de Berlin et la Convention de Chypre.

L'incident de Zeytoun ne forme qu'un détail de la crise Arménienne. Si votre Seigneurie voulait bien m'honorer d'une courte audience, je pourrais lui exposer l'opinion de mes compatriotes de Turquie sur le récent projet du Sultan d'envoyer une Commission Mixte d'enquête en Arménie, et lui expliquer la question Arménienne telle qu'elle est comprise par les Arméniens eux-mêmes.

En attendant vos ordres, j'ai l'honneur, &c.
(Signé) MINASSE TCHÉRAZ,
Ex-Délégué Arménien à Londres et au Congrès de Berlin.

No. 88.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received October 17.)

(No. 312.) *Constantinople, October* 11, 1892.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herein to your Lordship an extract from the "Daily News," which contains information of a most misleading character.

No Imperial Iradé has been sent to the Sublime Porte, nor has anything been laid before the Council of Ministers, with respect to the matter referred to by the "Daily News" correspondent.

The report is entirely without foundation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure in No. 88.

Extract from the "Daily News" of October 1, 1892.

THE SULTAN AND THE ARMENIANS.—APPOINTMENT OF A SPECIAL COMMISSION.
(From our Correspondent.)

Constantinople, Friday night.

THE Sultan has forwarded an Iradé to the Grand Vizier, informing him that he proposes to send a Commission to Armenia to examine and report upon the condition of that country, and to learn what grievances exist. His Majesty has directed his Minister to consult with the Council of Ministers, and to furnish him with the names of two superior military officers, two civil functionaries, Moslems, and an equal number of Christians, to become members of the Commission. This step is valuable, as showing the intentions of the Sultan; but everything depends upon the character of the persons appointed.

No. 89.

The Earl of Rosebery to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 213. Secret.) *Foreign Office, October* 18, 1892.

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatches Nos. 186 and 196 of the 6th and 15th June last, I transmit to your Excellency a copy of a letter which has been written from the prison at Aleppo to Mr. Gladstone by the Armenian Archbishops of Zeitoun and Marash,* calling attention to the manner in which the Armenians of Zeitoun have been treated by the Vali of Aleppo and other Turkish authorities, and appealing to Her Majesty's Government to obtain the removal of the Vali.

Your Excellency will be able to judge whether you can usefully take any further action on behalf of the petitioners, or make any representations in the sense desired by them, and I must leave the matter to your discretion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROSEBERY.

No. 90.

M. Minasse Tchéraz to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received October 19.)

M. le Ministre, 33, *De Vere Gardens, Londres, le* 17 *Octobre*, 1892.

AYANT eu l'honneur de recevoir votre lettre d'aujourd'hui, je m'empresse de profiter de la bienveillante permission de votre Seigneurie pour recommander à sa sollicitude la cause de mes compatriotes, les sujets Arméniens de la Porte.

Votre Seigneurie sait bien l'historique de la question Arménienne. La levée de boucliers des Chrétiens de la Turquie d'Europe avait excité la haine des Musulmans jusque contre les Chrétiens de la Turquie d'Asie. Les Arméniens en avaient cruellement souffert avant la déclaration de la dernière guerre Russo-Turque, qui fut à son tour un baptême de sang pour les Chrétiens d'Arménie. Aussi, lorsque la Russie victorieuse obtenait de la Porte, à San Stefano, des dédommagements et des concessions en faveur des peuples Chrétiens de la Turquie d'Europe, le Patriarche Nersès réussit-il à faire insérer dans le Traité un Article en faveur de l'Arménie. Cette clause fut modifiée au Congrès de Berlin, sur l'initiative du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, qui, par la Convention de Chypre, assumait d'ailleurs une responsabilité plus directe pour la meilleure administration de l'Asie Mineure. Deux ans après, le génie de Mr. Gladstone parvenait à assoupir les rivalités des Puissances dans la question d'Orient, et à les réunir dans une démonstration navale pour forcer la Porte à remplir ses engagements envers les Monténégrins, les Grecs, et les Arméniens. Le Monténégro et la Grèce ont enfin obtenu ce qui leur était dû, mais les Arméniens attendent encore l'application des réformes recommandées à la Porte par les Représentants des Puissances à Constantinople, dans leur note collective du 7 Septembre, 1880.

* Archbishops of Zeitoun and Marash, August 17, 1892.

Cet état de choses a eu le double résultat d'exciter la haine de la Porte contre ses sujets Arméniens, qui ont été plus systématiquement persécutés depuis que l'Europe leur a témoigné quelque intérêt, et d'inspirer aux Arméniens une conscience plus intime de leurs droits, qui les a poussé à les revendiquer plus hardiment et même à frapper quelquefois ceux qui les frappent. A l'heure qu'il est, les cachots Turcs en Europe, en Asie, et en Afrique, regorgent d'Arméniens, l'exil dévore la fleur de la jeunesse nationale, et ceux qui restent dans leur patrie gémissent sous un régime de terreur dont on n'a pas d'idée en Europe. Et alors que les Chrétiens sont écrasés de la sorte, leurs oppresseurs Musulmans reçoivent de la Porte de nouvelles faveurs. Les Circassiens sont plus honorés que par le passé, les Kurdes sont armés et encouragés, et les fonctionnaires prévaricateurs sont plus que jamais convaincus qu'ils n'ont rien à craindre de la part des Juges de la capitale de l'Arménie, qui n'ont infligé la moindre punition aux massacreurs Musulmans des Chrétiens d'Erzéroum, ni de la part des Juges de la capitale de l'Empire, qui ont acquitté un monstre comme Moussa Bey.

Ce tableau, si noir qu'il soit, est malheureusement bien fidèle, et n'est pas uniquement tracé par un pinceau Arménien. Les Rapports Consulaires, les publications des voyageurs Anglais, Français, et Belges, ne cachent pas que le sort des Arméniens est vraiment misérable, et si l'Europe se décidait à envoyer dans les provinces Arméniennes une Commission d'Enquête Internationale, elle verrait bien vite que ces plaintes n'ont rien d'exagéré. C'est dans cette conviction que nos prélats, notre Assemblée Ecclésiastique, et notre Patriarcat ont protesté en Turquie, comme nos Colonies ont protesté en dehors de la Turquie. C'est également dans cette conviction que le Comité Anglo-Arménien a fait appel à l'opinion publique en Angleterre, et que d'éminents philanthropes ont élevé leur voix en Europe et en Amérique.

La Porte a enfin cru devoir faire quelque chose pour éviter cet orage. Elle a décidé d'envoyer en Arménie une Commission de quatre fonctionnaires Musulmans et quatre Chrétiens. Cette décision, même si elle était appliquée, ce qui n'a pas été le cas, ne saurait contenter les Arméniens, qui savent que la nomination de membres Chrétiens destinés à jouer le rôle d'hommes de bois n'a pour objet que de jeter de la poudre aux yeux de l'Europe Chrétienne. Ce n'est pas la première fois depuis le Congrès de Berlin que le Gouvernement Ottoman envoie des Commissions Mixtes en Arménie et en Cilicie, et l'expérience a montré que contrairement à ce qui se passe dans d'autres pays, on nomme en Turquie une Commission non pas pour résoudre une question, mais pour l'enterrer. Chaque fois que la pression intérieure ou extérieure devient trop grande, la Porte nomme une Commission, qui reçoit pour instructions de déclarer fort exagérées les plaintes formulées; de reconnaître la légitimité de quelques-unes d'entre elles; de prendre certaines mesures de bonne administration, prédestinées à avoir la vie courte; de faire destituer quelques fonctionnaires, qui reçoivent bien souvent des charges plus importantes dans d'autres parties de l'Empire; et d'exiler une partie des scélérats, qui retournent plus tard au théâtre de leurs exploits, redoublant de zèle pour combler les lacunes de leur carrière. Tout cela prend quelques mois, et la Porte rappelle la Commission dès qu'elle voit que toute pression a cessé et qu'il y plus pour elle aucun danger à laisser dormir la question.

Votre Seigneurie sait que les Arméniens ont demandé au Congrès de Berlin une autonomie administrative pour leurs provinces. L'Europe la leur a refusée, mais elle a créé en leur faveur, dans l'Acte de Berlin, l'Article LXI, dont elle a expliqué la portée dans la note collective du 7 Septembre, 1880. Les Arméniens s'inclinent devant une pareille autorité, et ne réclament aujourd'hui que l'application des réformes recommandées par cette note. Ils dénoncent la conduite du Gouvernement Turc, qui, au lieu de réaliser ces améliorations, dont il serait d'ailleurs le premier à profiter, cherche à éluder ses triples engagements. Ils prient votre Seigneurie de vouloir bien reprendre l'œuvre du Ministère Libéral de 1880, en invitant les Puissances à faire auprès de la Porte une démarche en faveur de l'application des réformes promises. Dans le cas où les Signataires du Traité de Berlin resteraient sourds à nos pressantes sollicitations, nous espérons que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique voudra bien s'inspirer de ses engagements spéciaux pour appeler le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan à prendre en considération les réclamations légitimes des Arméniens, ses sujets d'une loyauté séculaire et proverbiale, qui ne demandent ni indépendance, ni suprématie, mais tout simplement sécurité et justice.

J'ai, &c.

(Signé) MINASSE TCHÉRAZ,

Ex-Délégué Arménien à Londres et au Congrès de Berlin.

No. 91.

M. Minasse Tchéraz to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received October 19.)

M. le Ministre, *Londres, 33, De Vere Gardens, le 18 Octobre*, 1892.

EN communiquant à M. le Premier Ministre et à votre Seigneurie les documents que m'avaient fait parvenir les détenus Arméniens de la Cilicie, j'avais pris la liberté de les résumer dans mes lettres du 10 et du 11 courant. Je crois utile d'adresser aujourd'hui à votre Seigneurie un résumé plus détaillé, contenant en même temps certains renseignements que je viens de recevoir d'un détenu laïque. Je n'ai pas les moyens de contrôler les graves accusations formulées contre les autorités Turques; mais si le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique ordonnait à son Représentant à Alep de faire à Zeytoun une enquête sur la mort des 554 enfants et les autres chefs d'accusation, la vérité ne tarderait pas à se faire.

J'ai, &c.

(Signé) MINASSE TCHÉRAZ.

Ex-Délégué Arménien à Londres et au Congrès de Berlin.

Inclosure in No. 91.

Memorandum.

LE Vali d'Alep, Arif Pacha, ne poursuit qu'un objet: s'enrichir sous le patronage de Redvan Pacha, Préfet de Constantinople, et du Maréchal Dervish Pacha, favori du Sultan.

Peu après son installation à Alep il se rend à Marash, chef-lieu de la commune de Zeytoun, pour combiner avec Salih Pacha, alors Gouverneur de Marash, les plans d'une campagne contre Zeytoun. Il fait destituer le Caïmacam, qui gouvernait cette ville avec équité, le remplace par le fameux scélérat Kadri Bey, gracie six bandits et leur fait obtenir des rémunérations en argent, fait vacciner gratuitement, par le Pharmacien Municipal du Gouvernement, 554 garçons à Zeytoun, âgés de 2 à 10 ans, qui meurent comme emprisonnés dans l'espace de cinq à dix jours, et sous prétexte d'encaisser les impôts arrivés, il fait emprisonner les paysans, dont plusieurs meurent sous la fustigation. On arrête l'instituteur-poète Sempad Der-Ghazarian, qui, après une absence de vingt ans, revenait chez ses vieux parents à Zeytoun; traité de vagabond, bien qu'accompagné de ses deux enfants et de sa jeune femme, qui était dans une position intéressante, il est conduit d'Albistan au cachot humide de Marash, sans aucune nourriture pendant trente-six heures, et plus tard à celui d'Alep. Le prêtre Zeytounien Ghévonte était envoyé en mission à Bayas par ordre de son supérieur; on l'arrête dans sa maison, avec une jeune religieuse de ses parents, et on l'emprisonne (cette religieuse reste encore en prison avec des prostituées, et son frère, arrêté en même temps qu'elle, gémit dans un cachot en attendant qu'on se donne la peine de lui dire pourquoi il est détenu). On a accusé les Arméniens d'avoir tué le gendarme Osman, assassiné par les bandits qu'on avait graciés; on a prétendu que Kadri Bey a été forcé par des insurgés à déserter sa résidence (Septembre 1890). Là-dessus on fait diriger sur Zeytoun une fusillade nourrie (18,000 cartouches d'après les statistiques officielles), ce qui a pour résultat de faire avorter de terreur dix-sept femmes enceintes, d'affoler huit personnes, et de causer la mort à sept enfants et une jeune femme. Les soldats Turcs tirent même sur un mort et les gens qui le conduisaient à sa dernière demeure, et profanent les églises et les couvents; un d'eux est décoré du Médjidié pour avoir tué un brave Arménien âgé de 25 ans, Turadu Arlin. On fait saccager par les troupes et livrer au fer et au feu cinq villages Arméniens et deux villages Musulmans. Après avoir forcé 100 à 150 Zeytouniens à déclarer dans la caserne qu'ils avaient été invités à s'insurger, on télégraphie à Constantinople qu'on vient de réprimer une grande révolte, et on attend les récompenses du Sultan. Mais la Porte nomme une Commission d'Enquête, présidée par le Général Mahmed Ali Pacha, et fait destituer Salih Pacha. Le Vali réussit pourtant à influencer la Cour d'Assises d'Alep, qui, sans se soucier de la déposition de Sarkis Betchakian et d'une trentaine d'autres témoins, condamne Mgr. Garabed, Archevêque de Zeytoun, à la détention perpétuelle dans une forteresse, Mgr. Nigoghos, Archevêque Octogénaire de Marash, Supérieur du Couvent de Frnouz et Pasteur d'une vingtaine de villages avec une population Chrétienne de 10,000 âmes, à l'emprisonnement pour une période indéterminée, et le prêtre

Ghévonte à la peine capitale. Elle condamne, de plus, M. S. Der-Ghazarian à cinq ans de détention dans une enceinte fortifiée, sept autres Zeytouniens à la peine capitale, dix autres aux travaux forcés à perpétuité, un autre à dix, quatre autres à huit, et dix-huit autres à cinq ans de galère (huit autres avaient succombé aux mauvais traitements en prison: G. Tozlian, T. Minas, K. et O. Dadour, H. Egan, M. Boussouv, A. Hovsep et l'instituteur Constantinopolitain Vrianès). Plusieurs autres furent acquittés, après avoir souffert les horreurs du cachot pendant des mois et des années. Parmi les prisonniers que le Vali fit acquitter moyennant finances, on compte MM. A. Gulvanessian (120*l.*), K. Marganian (50*l.*), M. Andréassian (70*l.*), G. Partamian (60*l.*), A. Bozian (20*l.*), P. Azarian (10*l.*), M. Tozlian (6*l.*), total 336*l.* Il a extirpé de plus fortes sommes aux riches de Marash, qu'il a baptisés du titre de *suspects*: à MM. K. Herlakian (800*l.*), G. Bilézikdjian et Cie. (188*l.*), G. Tchorbadjian et Cie. (170*l.*), K. Mouradian (60*l.*), P. Ghévonte (500*l.*), total 1,718*l.* Il a reçu, de plus, 70*l.* de quelques prisonniers acquittés, mais qu'il avait fait retenir en prison pour les forcer à faire ce versement. Total complet: 2,124*l.* D'autres *suspects* sont amenés à Alep de temps à autre; ils connaissent maintenant comment s'y prendre; ils vont trouver le Juif du Vali, lui versent une somme convenue et partent sans être molestés. Le nombre des *suspects* qui ont préféré se réfugier dans les montagnes s'élève à vingt-cinq.

Toutes ces condamnations sont basées sur dix chefs d'accusation:—

1. Que 200 Zeytouniens, réunis dans l'église et quelques maisons du quartier de Bozhâir, ont tiré sur les troupes (les accusés demandent qu'on leur montre un seul blessé).

2. Que les Zeytouniens ont pénétré dans le local du Gouvernement et fait évader deux prisonniers (les accusés répondent que la caisse et les archives n'ont pas été touchées et que bien des prisonniers s'évadent même de la solide prison d'Alep).

3. Que les Zeytouniens ont bâti, au Couvent de Sourp-Prguitch, un fort imprenable, dominant la caserne (les accusés objectent qu'ils avaient réparé les chambres destinées aux pèlerins et séparées de la caserne par des monts et des vallons).

4. Que les Zeytouniens ont tenu, à l'église et ailleurs, des réunions pour délibérer sur un plan d'insurrection (les accusés soutiennent qu'ils ne s'étaient réunis qu'à l'église pour réciter leurs prières comme à l'ordinaire).

5. Que les Zeytouniens ont réuni et distribué de l'argent, des armes, et des vivres (les accusés font remarquer qu'on n'avait pas même trouvé de fusils chez les soixante-dix à quatre-vingts Arméniens arrêtés et que de petites sommes et des vivres avaient été distribués, comme à l'ordinaire, aux pauvres à l'occasion des fêtes).

6. Que les Zeytouniens ont distribué des munitions de guerre (les accusés déclarent qu'on n'avait saisi sur la route de Marash à Zeytoun qu'un sac de petites balles pour la chasse, 2 oques de plomb dont on n'aurait pu faire que cinquante à soixante balles, 4 litres de soufre dont les montagnards se servent pour certaines maladies des animaux domestiques, et une centaine de silex dont les bergers se servent pour allumer leurs cigarettes, tous articles de commerce envoyés d'un marchand à un autre).

7. Que les Zeytouniens ont tué le gendarme Osman, qui avait inspecté l'édifice de Sourp-Prguitch, comme prémices de leur révolte (les accusés rappellent que des menaces de mort avaient été proférées contre Osman par des gens qui avaient des relations avec sa femme et ses sœurs et que ce meurtre ne saurait avoir un caractère politique).

8. Que les Zeytouniens ont blessé trois soldats (les accusés exigent qu'on découvre et punisse les vrais coupables).

9. Qu'un Zeytounien a composé et propagé, il y a dix ans, des chansons anti-Turques (les accusés maintiennent que M. Der-Ghazarian était en prison pendant ces troubles, qu'il n'y a aucune preuve contre lui et qu'un témoin a avoué avoir été invité par Salih Pacha à déposer contre cet innocent poète).

10. Que les Zeytouniens ont été invités à l'insurrection par les chants mélodieux d'une jeune religieuse (les accusés réclament qu'elle soit jugée, au lieu d'être gardée parmi des prostituées dans le cachot d'Alep).

Les accusés ont adressé des télégrammes et des requêtes au Patriarcat, à la Porte, et au Sultan, mais en vain. Ils réclament qu'ils soient remis en liberté ou que leur procès soit au moins transféré à la capitale, en même temps qu'une Commission Mixte, formée d'un Turc et d'un Anglais, serait envoyée à Zeytoun pour faire une enquête sur la mort des 554 enfants et les autres chefs d'accusation. La Cour de Cassation d'Alep a envoyé son Arrêt à celle de Constantinople, où un avocat Arménien, M. Krikov Zohrab, sera chargé de la défense des accusés. La question est d'une urgence extrême;

huit détenus sont déjà morts, et si l'on n'intervient pas à temps, l'Archevêque octogénaire et les autres prisonniers pourraient succomber aux tortures du cachot d'Alep.

No. 92.

The Earl of Rosebery to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 217. Confidential.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, October 24, 1892.*

MR. —— had an interview on the 27th ultimo with the Permanent Under-Secretary of State. He stated that the persecution of the Armenians in Cilicia was daily increasing. He undertook to record in writing several instances of the treatment of which he had spoken to be submitted to me. This statement he forwarded in a letter which was received in this Department on the 20th ultimo, and a copy will be sent to your Excellency in another despatch.

Sir Philip Currie assured Mr. —— of my readiness to do what might be possible on behalf of the Armenians, but he pointed out the difficulty of interfering between the Sultan and his Armenian subjects, and he suggested that representations on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, if they went beyond unofficial communications from the British Embassy at Constantinople, might have the effect not of remedying the evils of which Mr. —— complained, but of rendering the condition of the Armenians even more intolerable, although Mr. —— appeared to think that any change for the worse was impossible.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROSEBERY.

No. 93.

Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian to Consul Graves.—(Received at the Foreign Office, October 25.)

(No. 27.)

Sir, *Kharpût, August 22, 1892.*

WITH reference to the subject contained in my despatch No. 24, I have the honour to report once again that in spite of the precautions taken by the Government, the Kurds of the Dersim Mountains have lately made another raid upon three or four villages of the Chemishgezek district, within an hour or two's distance from the place where troops are garrisoned for the protection of the inhabitants of the said district, and carried off cattle and other things they could lay hands upon.

It is premature to state now what other measures the authorities will have to take in order to capture and inflict severe punishment upon these daring marauders and secure the safety of the people, who are so frequently disturbed by the incursions of these turbulent Kurds, but it is evident that as long as such offenders are let go free without suffering the penalty of the law, they will be more emboldened in their lawless pursuits. I am told the peaceable inhabitants of the neighbourhood of the mountains are in a chronic state of fear and dread, and have once more applied to the Government for protection.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN.

No. 94.

The Archbishops of Zeïthoun and Fruouz to Mr. Gladstone.—(Received at the Foreign Office, October 25.)

Excellence, *Prison d'Alep, le 9 (21) Septembre, 1892.*

NOUS avons eu l'honneur de vous adresser une lettre-rapport en date du 5 (17) Août, dans laquelle, après vous avoir présenté nos humbles félicitations, nous avons exposé la triste situation dans laquelle nous nous trouvons, ainsi que les quelques millions de malheureux Arméniens Ottomans qui gémissent sous le poids de la mauvaise direction de leurs Gouverneurs ignorants et tyranniques, encouragés qu'ils

sont par l'intérêt que le Gouvernement Britannique paraissait prendre pour leur cause, soit dans le Congrès de Berlin, soit dans d'autres circonstances; s'accrochant à l'espoir des réformes tant de fois promises éveillés qu'ils sont de la torpeur léthargique dans laquelle plusieurs siècles de souffrance les avaient jetés et rendus familiers à cet engourdissement d'insensibilité réduite à l'état d'habitude ou de nature.

Les Arméniens se sont enfin réveillés mais ce réveil multiplia leurs douleurs, car il est bien cruel d'avoir la conscience de soi-même quand on souffre réellement.

Nous venons, Excellence, supplier le Gouvernement Britannique en votre auguste personne de vouloir bien nous accorder soit un narcotique qui nous enlève cette sensibilité d'enthousiasme, soit un poison dans lequel nous trouverons le repos dans une mort morale.

Les derniers événements qui ont eu lieu à Constantinople et l'agression contre son Éminence le Patriarche, viennent confirmer jusqu'à un certain point les observations que nous avons eu l'honneur de signaler à votre Excellence dans notre lettre précédente, au sujet de l'exaltation désespérée dans laquelle se trouvent les Arméniens; le nombre des rebelles et des faiseurs de troubles augmente sans cesse, leur hardiesse est sans limites; Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan continue à être la dupe de son entourage, en confiant sans méfiance les affaires de la question Arménienne à Dervish Pacha dans la capitale, et à Arif Pacha et ses semblables dans les autres départements peuplés en majeure partie par les Arméniens, et s'il est vrai que c'est d'après l'avis de Dervish Pacha qu'on a arrêté et fait mettre en prison 300 Arméniens à Constantinople, nous entendrons bientôt parler de bien d'autres faits de rébellion; car, la plus grande faute d'un Gouvernement, c'est de vouloir opposer la force brutale à l'opinion publique et au sentiment de toute une nation; l'avantage qu'on tire de l'emploi de la force est factice et de peu de durée. Ainsi, la violence du Gouvernement, même à l'égard des prélats comme nous; notre emprisonnement et le mauvais traitement qu'on nous fait subir, nous ont enlevé toute sorte de prestiges aux yeux du vulgaire, et, par conséquent, ont diminué notre influence sur le peuple.

Que votre Excellence juge s'il reste au clergé le même respect dans le cœur du laïque, quand le Patriarche même d'une nation se trouve en butte aux complots et court le risque de tomber sous le poignard d'un assassin, quand deux Archevêques, dont l'un est Nicoghos, Archevêque de Frnouz, vieillard respectable de 88 ans, prélat depuis quarante-cinq ans, se trouve emprisonné depuis quatre mois par les ordres d'un méchant petit Juge d'Instruction, sans fait, ni cause, ni procès, ni témoins, ni jugement, mais uniquement pour le bon plaisir du Gouverneur d'Alep, Arif Pacha, au mépris de toutes les lois de l'Empire, et malgré les privilèges accordés au Patriarcat par leurs Majestés les Empereurs Ottomans, privilèges qui datent et qui furent respectés depuis plusieurs siècles; il est clairement mentionné dans ces Firmans qu'un prélat ne doit être emprisonné que dans un lieu digne et convenable, et ce n'est qu'après avoir été condamné et dépouillé de sa qualité ecclésiastique. L'autre, Garabed, Archevêque de Zeïthoun, a été condamné à Alep à l'emprisonnement à perpétuité dans une enceinte fortifiée, sans témoins ni preuve ni indice, mais uniquement par la volonté absolue du susdit Gouverneur, Arif Pacha; la prison dans laquelle nous sommes détenus n'est point la place convenable à notre rang, désignée dans nos Firmans de privilèges, mais elle est bien celle des criminels, assassins, meurtriers, parricides, &c.; nous y vivons sur un pied d'égalité parfaite avec les scélérats de la lie du peuple.

Les susdits privilèges accordent l'avantage aux prélats, dans le cas où ils doivent être jugés, que leur procès et jugement se fassent sous les auspices du Patriarcat de Constantinople, qui doit se faire présenter après avoir intimé officiellement à l'accusé l'ordre de se laisser juger; chose qu'on n'a point fait avec nous, mais on a nié même l'évidence de notre emprisonnement en prétendant que nous ne le sommes pas, avec une audace inouïe, non point au Patriarcat, mais même à l'Ambassade d'Angleterre à Constantinople.

Aucune plume ne saurait dépeindre l'état d'exaspération dans laquelle se trouvent les Arméniens du vilayet d'Alep, car la mesure a bien débordée sous le gouvernement d'Arif Pacha. Aux 554 bambins martyrs empoisonnés par la vaccination, et au cinquante et un morts, condamnés à mort ou à perpétuité, &c., ajoutons deux nouvelles victimes parmi les détenus à la prison d'Alep, qui depuis notre dernière lettre ont perdu la vie par l'obscurité, l'humidité, et les excessifs travaux qu'ils sont obligés de faire pour alléger leur misère; ainsi que tant d'autres malheurs et persécutions: les rançons, les amendes, les prisons; ajoutons aussi deux autres jeunes adolescents de 17 à 19 ans, arrêtés et mis en prison ces jours-ci pour avoir été autrefois en service chez l'un de nous—Nicoghos, Archevêque.

Sept villages de la montagne ont été saccagés, leurs habitants dissipés, les femmes et les vierges violées, l'important couvent du Saint-Sauveur, qui existe depuis huit siècles, démoli sous prétexte que c'était un fort, et tant de calamités subies par les Arméniens sans qu'ils puissent oser s'en plaindre, et si la voix des gémissements de leur doléance est parvenue à l'Europe, elle n'a pas trouvé aucun écho ni un fait sérieux de protection efficace, mais tout ce que l'Europe nous a montré consiste en un intérêt purement moral.

La pauvreté et le manque des moyens d'existence, ajoutés à la tyrannie des Gouverneurs, engagent les Arméniens de chercher par l'émigration en Amérique la vie et la sûreté; ces malheureux quittent leurs femmes et enfants chez eux à la grâce de Dieu et celle des Turcs, pour s'embarquer dans les ports de mer, mais, hélas! quelle cruelle déception les y attend; ils sont aussitôt pris par l'autorité Ottomane accablés de fer et livrés à la cruauté des gendarmes à cheval, qui les entraînent au pied par troupeaux, nus et affamés, liés les uns aux autres par des cordes, comme les prisonniers de guerre des sauvages de l'Afrique, malgré la rigueur des saisons, promenés de prison en prison jusqu'à leur réintégration chez eux. Ces traitments, joints d'un côté aux intrigues des missionnaires Catholiques Franciscains, qui font miroiter aux yeux de nos paysans la perspective d'une protection réelle de la France, la diminution des impôts écrasants, et autres avantages, donnent à ces troupeaux restés sans pasteurs un espoir vague, et font naître dans leur imagination des velléités de changement de religion et détériorer par suite leur sentiment national; ajoutons à ces intrigues ceux des émissaires Russes, qui font la propagande pour la religion et la politique Moscovites, appuyée par l'exemple du passé des Bulgares avec la même Russie.

Excellence, nous venons d'apprendre avec bonheur que votre Ambassade à Constantinople cherche à faire destituer les quatre Gouverneurs des provinces de l'Arménie; cela a fait surgir en nous l'espoir de compter parmi eux celui d'Alep, mais nous pensons d'un autre côté quelle sera l'utilité de ces destitutions pour nous, si notre oppresseur, Arif Pacha et ses collègues, échappent aux châtiments qu'ils méritent, et cela en faisant son procès dans la haute Cour de Constantinople, où nous avons la ferme résolution de comparaître et de défendre énergiquement notre cause, pour confondre ce monstre cruel en demandant vengeance du sang de nos enfants, les 554 martyrs, ainsi que ces cinquante et un autres victimes de sa tyrannie; nous crierons jusqu'à notre dernier souffle: Malheur à Hérode, vengeance contre Néron, repos et sûreté dans nos foyers ou la mort!!! tel que nous avons écrit dans un testament politique adressé par nous du fond de nos cachots à notre Patriarcat de Constantinople et celui de Jérusalem.

Nous n'avons pas la prétention de connaître la politique; il est peut-être bien hardi à nous d'émettre surtout devant votre Excellence, premier diplomate de l'Europe entière, des idées ou des commentaires diplomatiques, mais nous exposons simplement ce que notre inexpérience et notre ignorance dans cette matière nous dictent.

La question nationale de l'Arménie, la religion des Arméniens étant des choses secondaires, ne faudrait-il pas penser à l'avenir—probablement très prochain—de la Turquie, en laissant la clef de la question d'Orient entre les mains de la Russie, qui s'introduit dans ce point de la terre entre la Perse, l'Irak, et le reste de la Turquie, en s'alliant à elle les 4 ou 5,000,000 d'Arméniens qui occupent ce centre, les faisant agir en temps voulu selon ses buts et ses fins?

Nous osons espérer que vous voudrez bien enregistrer nos humbles avis et avertissements dans les notes politiques de votre haut Gouvernement; il viendra peut-être un moment où l'on s'en rappellera.

Veuillez, très honorable Monsieur, prêtez un peu d'attention à nos justes exclamations, nous venir en aide pour nous délivrer le plus promptement possible de l'opprobre, de l'oppression honteuse, de la tyrannie et de la prison du scélérat Arif Pacha, qui, après tant de méfaits, ose proposer à l'un de nous—Nicoghos, Archevêque—son élargissement contre une somme d'or, qu'il convoite pour ajouter aux sommes déjà indiquées dans notre précédente lettre.

Daignez, &c.

(L.S.) (Signé) GARABED,
Archevêque de Zeïthoun.

(L.S.) (Signé) NICOGHOS,
Archevêque de Frnouz.

No. 95.

The Archbishops of Zeithoun and Frnouz to Mr. Gladstone.—(Received at the Foreign Office, October 25.)

(Confidentielle.)
Excellence, *Prison d'Alep, le 9 (21) Septembre*, 1892.

NOUS avons longtemps hésité avant de prendre le parti de vous adresser la présente, ne sachant pas comment nous y prendre; car nous ne sommes pas habitués à de pareilles démarches, mais, au lieu de dire (comme le proverbe), "Noblesse oblige," nous dirons, "Misère oblige."

Dans nos autres lettres nous avons eu l'honneur de vous expliquer, M. le Ministre, toute notre situation et que, ceux qui parmi nous possédaient quelques ressources, ils s'en sont dépouillées pour satisfaire la cupidité d'Arif Pacha, et sauver les uns leur vie les autres leur liberté.

Nous sommes restés avec les condamnés, c'est-à-dire ceux qui ne possèdent plus rien, de sorte que nous sommes avec trente-deux personnes dans le plus affreux dénouement. L'hiver approche, les besoins se multiplient; nos codétenus sont tous pères de nombreuses familles; le besoin se fait sentir pour eux et pour les leurs, nous ne prétendons pas que nous sommes plus heureux qu'eux, et puisque nous sommes en voie de confidence, nous ne rougissons pas de vous dire la vérité.

Connaissant les nobles sentiments du Gouvernement et du peuple Anglais qui sont, avec la France, le modèle de l'humanité et de la charité, que nous avons souvent vu tendre généreusement les mains du secours aux éprouvés mêmes des idolâtres et des habitants des régions les plus éloignées et à des peuples qui n'ont d'autres titres à leurs bienfaits que celui d'être hommes, nous nous permettons de nous adresser à votre munificence. Nous sommes Chrétiens, nous sommes déjà sous la protection morale de l'Angleterre, à laquelle, nous croyons appartenir par la sympathie et pour laquelle nous avons l'attachement de la reconnaissance.

Nous venons, M. le Ministre, implorer la généreuse charité de la Grande-Bretagne en votre auguste personne; nous ne prétendons pas vous indiquer la manière ni la source des secours que vous voudrez bien daigner vous occuper de réunir et de nous faire obtenir; quêtes, sociétés de bienfaisance, actes de charité, donation du Gouvernement prise sur les menus frais de l'État, &c., c'est à votre Excellence de choisir et de mettre en action le moyen le plus pratique.

Daignez, &c.

(L.S.) (Signé) GARABED,
Archevêque de Zeithoun.

(L.S.) (Signé) NICOGHOS,
Archevêque de Frnouz.

No. 96.

Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian to Consul Graves.—(Received at the Foreign Office, October 25.)

(No. 29. Confidential.)
Sir, *Kharput, September 22*, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to report, for your information, that about a month ago, and within the short interval of four or five days, two mysterious murders have been committed within the immediate vicinity of this town; in both cases the bodies of the victims were left for days in a cave, and the authorities were apprised of the fact by an anonymous notice affixed to the gate of the Government premises. One of the dead bodies, that of a full grown young man, was found in an almost decomposed state, and the other was of a lad about 15 or 16 years of age. At the inquest the bodies could not be identified, and since then they have not been claimed by any one, nor has the slightest clue as yet been found to lead to the discovery of the criminal or criminals; the affair, therefore, is still enveloped in mystery.

A similar case occurred also, I am told, near to a village about three hours' ride from Memuret-el-Aziz—the seat of the Central Government of the province—of which I have as yet been unable to obtain a reliable account.

Were I to give you the account of the other cases of murder and robbery committed in Kharput Plain within the short space of time above mentioned, I should unnecessarily trespass on your time; I shall, however, confine myself to the following instance, which will show you plainly the state of things. A village half-an-hour's

distance from this place, and as much as that from the seat of Government, and surrounded also by other large villages, has lately been attacked by a band of rowdies in broad daylight, but the timely arrival of the gendarmerie saved the people from the injuries, which might otherwise have been inflicted upon them. I regret to state that none of the offenders were apprehended.

I have to remark that crimes as those stated above have rarely been heard of in this district. The Plain of Kharput, as you may be aware, is densely populated (the villages almost joining one another) by law-abiding people, who are peaceably engaged in agricultural pursuits. I am, therefore, unable to trace the present state of things to any apparent cause.

I take this opportunity to call once more your attention to the deplorable state of the Dersim district. The Kurds not having been called to account for the outrages committed by them in past time are, it appears, with redoubled energy spreading depredation right and left. I hear almost every day of new cases of robbery, attacks upon villages, and even murders committed by them, not only in the district of Chemishgezek, but also in Charsandjak and other places. In a recent incursion upon the villages of Egin, two of the gendarmes patrolling in the district were fired upon and wounded while chasing these daring Kurds, and I regret to state that they both died within a short time from the effect of their wounds.

In consequence of this state of affairs the roads have become insecure, and no one ventures to carry on business in those regions where the authority of the Government is felt less and disorganization is more than complete.

In my opinion blame cannot be attached to the Local Government for inactivity in the case, as they have troops garrisoned here and there, and a mounted gendarmerie force is constantly patrolling in the districts in question, and I believe they are doing their duty. But owing to natural and other causes, enumerated in a former despatch, they cannot cope with these desperadoes; to subdue them would need stronger measures. I have recently learnt that the inhabitants of the Chemishgezek district, in despair at the measures taken by the local authorities for their protection, have laid their grievances at the foot of the Throne of the Sultan, imploring His Imperial Majesty to deliver them from this intolerable condition. It is to be hoped that by the command of His Majesty an effectual plan may be devised to remedy the existing evil.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN.

No. 97.

The Earl of Rosebery to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 218.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, October 27*, 1892.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 213 of the 13th instant, I transmit to your Excellency copies of two further letters from the Archbishops of Zeitoun and Furnouz,* appealing to Her Majesty's Government to assist them and their fellow-Armenians.

I leave it to you to take any steps at the Porte which you may consider prudent and practicable in the matter of their representations, and I should be glad if you would furnish me with any observations you may have to offer on the statements made by the Archbishops.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROSEBERY.

No. 98.

Foreign Office to M. Minasse Tchéraz.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October 27*, 1892.

I AM directed by the Earl of Rosebery to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 17th and 18th instant regarding the condition of the Armenian subjects of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan.

* No. 94.

I am to state, in reply, that his Lordship does not consider the present time opportune for proposing collective representations to the Porte on the part of the Treaty Powers, particularly having regard to the state of affairs which, in your letter of the 17th instant, you say followed on the presentation of the note of the 7th September, 1880.

Whenever specific instances of oppression or injustice are brought to the notice of Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople, the Ambassador takes such steps as he deems best calculated to obtain the issue by the Porte of suitable instructions to the local authorities.

Lord Rosebery considers that this mode of proceeding is, in the present condition of affairs, more likely to be followed by satisfactory results than formal official representations.

Copies of your letters will at once be communicated to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) P. CURRIE.

No. 99.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received November* 8.)

(No. 330.)
Constantinople, October 19, 1892.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herein copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Aleppo, inclosing a protest signed by the Armenian Bishop of Hadjin against certain treatment to which he had been subjected.

I have brought the matter unofficially to the notice of the Grand Vizier, and his Highness will communicate with the Governor of Aleppo before taking any action respecting it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 99.

Acting-Consul Catoni to Sir Clare Ford.

Aleppo, October 6, 1892.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency a complaint, in form of protest, which I have received from the Armenian Bishop of Hadjin, who, I hear, has been exiled in the village of Munbudje, which is occupied almost exclusively by the Circassians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. CATONI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 99.

Armenian Bishop of Hadjin to Acting Consul Catoni.

JE soussigné Ohannes Kazandjian, Évêque Arménien de Hadjin, du vilayet d'Adana, proteste devant le Ciel et vis-à-vis des Consuls des Grandes Puissances Signataires du Traité de Berlin, en priant MM. les Consuls de faire parvenir ma protestation présente à leur Ambassade respective à Constantinople, contre la violence commise sur ma personne par les autorités Ottomanes, qui, contrairement aux lois mêmes de l'Empire, et, sans aucune formalité de jugement ni de procès, m'ont enlevé à ma demeure pour me transporter dans la prison d'Adana, et, après m'y avoir détenu trois mois, m'entraînent par la force armée je ne sais pas où! J'ignore même ce que je deviendrai, livré entre les mains de grotesques soldats, brutes et barbares, qui seraient capables de m'assassiner au désert et de cacher mon corps à tous les regards. J'élève ma voix d'opprimé contre ce traitement sans nom, vu l'immense danger qui

me menace et la tyrannie dont je suis l'objet. Serait-ce bien le résultat de l'amélioration du sort des Arméniens en Turquie?

Fait en prison d'Alep ce 18 (30) Septembre, 1892.

(Signé) ÉVÊQUE DE HADJIN.
KAZANDJIAN.

No. 100.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received November* 12, 1·10 P.M.)

(No. 107.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, November* 12, 1892, 12·57 P.M.

I HAD an interview yesterday with the Sultan. His Imperial Majesty alluded of his own accord to the subject of reforms in Asiatic Turkey, and assured me positively that the matter was occupying his most serious attention.

His Imperial Majesty is determined to send a Special Commission next spring to those provinces. It is to be furnished with powers to report upon their condition with a view to a remedy being applied in all cases where there may appear to be maladministration.

I am strongly inclined to believe from the earnest manner in which the Sultan spoke, that he is fully determined to carry out the reforms which are contemplated.

No. 101.

The Earl of Rosebery to Sir Clare Ford.

(No. 71.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, November* 16, 1892.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 107 of the 12th instant, reporting the Sultan's determination to send a Commission next spring to inquire into the condition of Her Majesty's Asiatic provinces, with a view to improving their administration.

I have to instruct your Excellency to convey to His Majesty the congratulations of Her Majesty's Government on having taken this decision. It is one which promises to be conducive alike to the happiness of his subjects and the strength of his Empire.

No. 102.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received November* 19, 3·35 P.M.)

(No. 109.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, November* 19, 1892, 3·11 P.M.

I HAVE received your Lordship's telegram No. 71 on the subject of Reforms.

I took steps yesterday to bring the matter to the Sultan's knowledge.

A very good impression seems to have been caused by the communication, and it will greatly tend to encourage His Imperial Majesty and his Government in carrying out the measures which are in contemplation.

No. 103.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received November* 23.)

(No. 342. Confidential.)
Constantinople, November 14, 1892.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I was present at the ceremony of the Selamlik on Friday last, and was received after it by the Sultan in private audience.

His Imperial Majesty of his own accord broached the subject of the reforms which he was anxious to effect in his Asiatic provinces. He had at heart, he said, the

improvement of the general condition of his Empire, and with that object in view he had sent about a year ago two officers of his own selection on a special tour of inspection into the Asiatic provinces. They had now returned to Constantinople, and were actually engaged in drawing up a full Report of the various requirements of the provinces.

His Imperial Majesty then went on to say that in appointing Governors to the provinces men were chosen who, so far as human foresight could insure, were endowed with those qualifications combining tact with ability and impartiality, which were necessary to enable them to perform the high duties intrusted to them, but that, unfortunately, on some occasions they did not realize by their acts the expectations which had been formed of them. Thus, said the Sultan, experience showed that whilst some Governors gave general satisfaction, others failed to do so.

It was therefore, he added, in order to provide against such regrettable contingencies, and to acquire at the same time a full and accurate knowledge of any shortcomings and cases of misgovernment which might exist, and which were so frequently laid to the account of the provincial authorities, that he had sent the two officers above mentioned on a mission.

His Imperial Majesty then informed me that the next step he contemplated taking was to send a Special Commission into the Asiatic provinces of the Empire. The state of the weather at this season of the year did not admit of his doing so at once, but the Commission would be ready to start in the early spring.

The persons composing it would be invested with full powers and authority to institute reforms in the Gendarmerie force as well as in the judicial Tribunals, and, in short, to redress all legitimate causes of complaint which might be substantiated by His Imperial Majesty's subjects, without distinction of race and creed.

The Sultan then expressed his sincere wish and determination to do all in his power to promote the welfare and happiness of his subjects, and to see that they were properly and equitably governed. His Imperial Majesty stated at the same time that he trusted that by a loyal and strict adherence to the programme he had traced out, he would be able to disarm the persevering and systematic hostility with respect to his policy in his Asiatic provinces which he met with at the hands of foreign critics abroad.

The Sultan spoke with great earnestness, as if he were resolved to have his intentions properly carried out. When he had finished speaking I thanked him cordially for the statement he had done me the honour to make to me, and I assured His Imperial Majesty that I should not fail to report his gracious words to your Lordship, on whom I felt sure they would produce a very favourable impression.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 104.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received November 23.)

(No. 343. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 14, 1892.*

IN my despatch No. 312 of the 11th ultimo, I had the honour to inclose to your Lordship copy of an extract from the London newspaper, the "Daily News," relative to a projected Commission to be sent to Asia Minor in order to examine into and report upon the general condition of the Turkish provinces there. I informed your Lordship that on my instituting inquiries of the Grand Vizier as to the accuracy of the report, His Highness had given the assurance that the Sultan had forwarded to him no Iradé on the matter. The Grand Vizier stated to Sir Alfred Sandison, my First Dragoman, that the idea of sending a Commission to the Turkish Asiatic provinces was a "purely palace one," and it now appears, from what His Imperial Majesty has told me, as reported in my immediately preceding despatch, that the idea is likely to be carried out.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 105.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received November 23.)

(No. 346.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 14, 1892.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 330 of the 29th October, I have the honour to forward herewith copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo with regard to the imprisoned Bishop of Hadjin.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 105.

Sir Clare Ford to Acting Consul Cafoni.

Sir, *Constantinople, November 14, 1892.*

ON the receipt of your despatch of the 6th October, 1892, I brought the Petition of the Bishop of Hadjin mosficintly to the notice of the Sublime Porte, and I inclose, for your information, copy of a reply which has been received from the Vali of Aleppo on the subject, and I should be glad to receive any observation you have to make thereon.

It is always a difficult and delicate matter for me to approach the Imperial Government on such questions, and I request that in future you will abstain from transmitting Petitions of this nature under simple coverer. Before forwarding them to me, you should ascertain to the best of your power whether they are such as I can properly base representations on, and state your convictions in the covering despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure 2 in No. 105.

Memorandum.

(Translation.)

AN answer has been received from the Vilayet of Aleppo by telegram, to the effect that the Armenian Bishop of Hadjin, Ohannes Kazangian, has not undergone imprisonment, but as it is proved by his own confession that he caused the wife of a soldier named Mustapha to be carried off to a monastery near Hadjin, and, after keeping her hidden there for two years, married her by force to an Armenian, he cannot be allowed to remain in the Vilayet of Adana, but has been sent to reside temporarily in Caza of Mubtieh.

No. 106.

Consul Graves to Sir Clare Ford.—(Received at the Foreign Office, December 6.)

(No. 53. Confidential.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, October 8, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to report my return to Erzeroum on the 1st instant, after a tour of thirty-three days' duration in the Vilayets of Erzeroum, Bitlis, and Van, and to submit to your Excellency the following observations on the condition of the districts traversed in the course of my journey.

Erzeroum Vilayet.—As for the Vilayet of Erzeroum, I had already made several short trips in the course of this summer in the north and north-east of the province, which I had found tolerably free from disturbance. On the present occasion I left Erzeroum on the 30th August by the Palan Duken Pass for Khinis. This caza I also traversed on my return journey, and I regret to be obliged to report that its present condition is highly unsatisfactory. The Armenian villages of the plain are exposed to constant raids from their Kurdish neighbours, cattle are driven off, men have been held to ransom, and crops burnt, and complaints to the Kaimakam, Hussein Bey, have so far proved entirely ineffectual.

The appearance of cholera in Bayazid and the Passin Plain obliged me to change my route, and prevented me from visiting those districts on my return from Van, as I had intended, but I regret this the less in that Mr. Vice-Consul Devey, who has just returned to Van, was able to inform me from personal observation, and from the accounts of an English traveller who recently passed through Alashgerd, that the Sandjak of Bayazid was fairly quiet.

It may therefore be said that the new Vali of Erzeroum, Haidar Pasha, has taken over the vilayet from Hassan Hairi Pasha under somewhat favourable circumstances, and credit should not be refused to the latter for his administration when one compares the present tranquillity with the disturbed condition of two years ago. There is, however, much room for improvement in the state of the gendarmerie, who are weak in number for so extensive a province, and generally several months in arrears of pay. The resources of the vilayet, insufficient at the best of times, are severely taxed to meet calls for money from Constantinople, and the claims of the gendarmerie, which should be a first charge upon the local revenues, are frequently neglected in consequence.

Bitlis Vilayet.—While riding from Khinis to Moush I remarked numerous small parties of wayfarers, a sure sign of comparative security on the road, and once in the Moush Plain one could not fail to be struck with the increased number and apparent efficiency of the police. Although complaints of small exactions and oppression on the part of the Kurds are frequent among the Armenian villagers, it is admitted that crimes against life and female honour have become rare under the rule of the Mutessarif of Moush, Emin Pasha, whose approaching transfer to Mardin appears to be a source of regret to all classes.

While I was at Moush I learnt that sixteen Armenians of the village of Vartennis are now in the Moush prison under sentence of fifteen years' imprisonment for causing the death of certain Kurds under the circumstances reported in Mr. Lloyd's despatch No. 71 of the 21st August, 1890. The infliction of this (for Turkey) extreme penalty upon so many persons seems to have been an unnecessarily severe measure, as it is well known that there are only four survivors of the five Vartennis men who actually took part in the affray with the Kurds.

In the south-eastern portion of the Plain of Moush, formerly the scene of Moussa Bey's depredations, I found that the terror of Moussa's name is far from having died out, and the possibility of his ultimate return is canvassed with feelings of the liveliest apprehension.

The neighbouring Cazas of Akhlat and Boulanik were visited on my return from Van, and I was thus enabled to compare what are perhaps the extremes of good and bad administration in the Province of Bitlis. The Kaimakam of Akhlat, Ibrahim Bey, is a most active and capable official, and has earned the confidence and gratitude of all classes, excepting the evil-doers, in whose pursuit he is indefatigable. In the Caza of Boulanik, however, the condition of affairs is most deplorable. Murder, cattle-raiding, and oppression are rife, and the Kaimakam, Hashim Bey, a relative of the Kaimakam of Khinis, to whom I have alluded above in unfavourable terms, is either unable or unwilling to take effectual measures for the restoration of order.

For greater convenience of reference, I have embodied the cases of complaint brought to my notice in Boulanik and Khinis in a separate Memorandum, which I have the honour to inclose herewith to your Excellency.

I spent four days at Bitlis, where I had opportunities of forming from personal intercourse a very favourable impression of the present Vali, Tahsin Pasha, as an enlightened and capable Governor. Tahsin Pasha has enjoyed the advantage of succeeding Réouf Pasha, a man of superior ability and integrity, and it is satisfactory to be able to report that the province does not appear to have lost ground in his hands.

The gendarmerie of the Bitlis Vilayet, which was reorganized by Réouf Pasha, is maintained by Tahsin Pasha at a high standard. The strength is about 1,250 men, of whom 800 are mounted, and 250 more are being added to the number. All the men we saw were well dressed and equipped, and I learnt that, at the time of my visit, they had been fully paid up to the end of the previous month. This regularity of payment enables them the more readily to obey the stringent orders of the Vali against levying unauthorized contributions on the villages, and the village Headmen are instructed, under severe penalties, only to supply them with food and forage against receipts which are payable at the Provincial Treasury, or else accepted in lieu of taxes. It is true that a regulation to this effect is supposed to exist throughout the Empire, but as far as my knowledge goes, Bitlis is the only vilayet in Kurdistan where it is not a dead letter.

Police regulations have also been introduced prohibiting the bearing of arms within the towns of Bitlis and Moush, and some severe examples have been made in the case of their infringement by the Kurds, whose habit it was to come to market armed to the teeth. It is to be hoped that this step may prove a prelude to a wider measure of disarmament.

Work on the roads connecting Bitlis with Moush on the one side and Sert on the other is progressing but very slowly. The engineering difficulties are considerable, and the inhabitants show the utmost aversion to supplying forced labour, or the money payment which is exacted in lieu thereof. However, the Vali has secured the services of a Government engineer, and a grant of money from the Ministry of Public Works for bridge-building, and he hopes to push on the work more rapidly in future.

I was informed after leaving Bitlis that an attempt had been made to procure the dismissal of Tahsin Pasha by some of the partizans of Emin Pasha, the former General in command of the 8th Division, whose transfer had been obtained by the Vali in consequence of his interference in civil affairs. This attempt, I am glad to say, has failed, and four of the principal movers in it have subsequently been banished from Bitlis. My own impression is that Tahsin Pasha's dismissal would be a serious blow to the cause of order and progress in this province.

Van Vilayet.—Leaving Bitlis for Van, I passed through the Cazas of Kartchigan and Vostan, the former of which is kept in a state of uneasiness by the depredations of a band led by a brigand known as Hadji, formerly one of Moussa Bey's men, to combat which I observed that the Kaimakam could only dispose of a very insufficient force of police. But from all I could hear the district lying immediately to the north of the Lake of Van, comprising the Cazas of Adiljevas, Arjish, and Bergri, is now the most disturbed portion of the province, owing to the turbulence of the Haidaranli Kurds, and has recently engaged the serious attention of the Vali, Bahri Pasha, who has been obliged to take stringent measures against some of the offending Chiefs.

While I was at Van I made the acquaintance of Bahri Pasha, who is a man of distinguished military services, and holds the rank of a General of Division. His Excellency is well spoken of for his integrity and energy, and appears to be sincerely anxious to maintain order and develop the resources and means of communication of this very backward province. It is to be hoped that he may direct his energies to the reorganization of the Van gendarmerie, which stands in grievous need of improvement. This extensive province, with its long line of frontier on the Persian side, and its mixed and turbulent population, has only 800 police in all, who are constantly several months in arrears of pay, and present a most motley and irregular appearance. On his first arrival Bahri Pasha made an attempt to pay their arrears, but he has not succeeded in establishing the principle of regular payment.

At the end of September I crossed the Lake of Van to Akhlat, and returned to Erzeroum on the 1st October, completing my journey by passing through the disturbed Cazas of Boulanik and Khinis, which form the subject of my separate Memorandum.

On the whole, it may be said that, with the exception of the districts to which I have drawn attention above, the condition of the country is fairly satisfactory, and shows an improvement upon the state of affairs reported in previous years by my predecessors. Nothing has occurred of late to give prominence to Armenian affairs. Arrests on trivial grounds for so-called political offences have happily become rare during the last few months, and there is no longer even a pretence of the existence of Revolutionary Committees or other seditious organizations within the country, although agitators living abroad in safety are still doing their best to prove the contrary, and so expose their fellow-countrymen in Turkey to uncalled-for severities. The authorities really appear disposed to abandon the system of vexatious treatment which has threatened to create feelings of genuine sedition against the Government where there had only existed a platonic sentiment of nationality, or mere discontent with local maladministration.

The main grievance under which the Armenians now suffer consists in the insufficient protection afforded to life and property by the Executive, especially in the disturbed districts lying to the north of the Lake of Van, and forming the point of contact between the three Vilayets of Erzeroum, Bitlis, and Van.

This evil is directly traceable to lack of energy and honesty of purpose in some of the local Sub-Governors in the first place, and in the next to the deficiencies of the gendarmerie force. The appointment of capable and upright Kaimakams to three or four cazas of Central Kurdistan in the place of the present incumbents of those posts would doubtless go far to remove this cause of complaint, provided the police force

were raised to and maintained at the same standard of efficiency I observed in the Bitlis district. It would, however, be essential to secure uniformity of purpose between the different Provincial Governments, and co-operation in the pursuit of evil-doers, a requirement of good government which does not exist at all at the present.

Serious attention is also required to the question of the carrying of arms. If the Government are not prepared to enact a measure for the disarmament of the Kurdish tribes, common fairness demands that the Christian subjects of the Sultan should also be allowed to carry such weapons as are requisite for the protection of their lives and property.

And lastly, I would point out that the Christian population have a serious cause of complaint in the differential treatment they meet with at the hands of the authorities, as compared with their Moslem fellow-subjects, in the application of the criminal law to cases of homicide. Wherever there is even a suspicion only of a Mussulman having been murdered by Christians, the latter are arrested wholesale. A score of men, sometimes the whole able-bodied male population of a village, the majority of whom are presumably innocent, are frequently left in prison for months during the interminable judicial inquiries and delays which follow, while it is notorious that similar treatment is not accorded to the Mussulmans in like cases. In support of this assertion, I have only to cite the case of Vartennis alluded to above; that of Giuvendik, in the Khinis Caza, described in my inclosed Memorandum; that of Narman, reported by Mr. Hampson in his despatch No. 116 of the 26th December, 1891; that of Sikkeh (see inclosure to my despatch No. 44 of the 4th August); and a similar case which has just occurred at Zizans, a village of the Shattak Caza of Van, the particulars of which have only just reached me, and will form the subject of a subsequent despatch. An amendment in this respect is greatly needed, and, if coupled with the adoption of such administrative measures as I have ventured to suggest above, would speedily restore confidence and prosperity to this part of Kurdistan, at the smallest expense to the State, and without any necessity for special legislation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure in No. 106.

Memorandum on the Condition of the Khinis and Boulanuk Cazas.

THE condition of the Cazas of Khinis (Erzeroum Vilayet) and Boulanuk (Vilayet of Bitlis), which adjoin one another, is simply deplorable.

In the course of a few days' travel, the following cases were collected by me and by Mr. Fitzmaurice, from villagers and zaptiehs, relating mainly to the villages in or near which we stopped, and care was taken to reject all about which there was any vagueness and uncertainty. I am assured that these cases might be multiplied almost indefinitely by visiting other villages in the same neighbourhood.

It will be seen that the names of the Kurdish Chiefs engaged in these acts of lawlessness are generally the same in both cazas, and that the worst of them are stated to hold commissions as officers in the new Hamidiyyé Cavalry.

Complaints addressed to the Kaïmakams, responsible for the maintenance of order in these two districts appear to be systematically disregarded; and it is curious to note that these two officials are nearly related, being both, I believe, nephews of the well-known Kurd, Ismaïl Pasha.

The following are the cases noted in the Caza of Boulanuk:—

1. In July of 1892 Andris (or Idris, or Ingris), a Hamidiyyé Captain, and his brother Zauher, of Heftrenk village, in Melazgerd district, came to levy fodder on the Armenian village of Hamsesheikh, three or four hours distant from Gop, the seat of the Boulanuk Kaïmakam, Hashim Bey. On two villagers, named Alo, son of Ghiragos, and Khatchadour, son of Bedros, declaring they had no hay, the Kurds replied that if the hay were not forthcoming they would shoot them. The Armenians still persisted that they had no hay, whereupon Ingris and his brother shot the two Armenians dead upon the spot. Word was given to the Kaïmakam, who had Ingris put in prison, from which he was released about a month afterwards, without undergoing any form of trial. It is commonly believed in the district that Ingris was released on a large consideration given to the Kaïmakam.

2. In the spring of this year Eghid Oglou Yusuf Agha, of the Hassananli tribe, a Colonel in the Hamidiyyé Cavalry, killed Moukho, an Armenian, of Shirvansheikh, as the result of some trifling dispute. The case was brought to the notice of the Boulanuk Kaïmakam, but no measures were taken to investigate the matter.

Shortly afterwards the same Eghid Oglou Yusuf Agha carried off four horses from the same Armenian village of Shirvansheikh; but the villagers, disheartened by the result of the above-mentioned murder case, did not even complain to the Kaïmakam.

3. This same Eghid Oglou Yusuf Agha, early in September last, carried off from Shirvansheikh four oxen, two the property of Kiatib Manoukh, and two of a certain Agob. The villagers' complaints were not listened to; the Kaïmakam, Hashim Bey, on one occasion saying to the Armenian villagers, "You have your 'Comitas,' the Kurds are our 'Comitas,'" tantamount to saying that he winked at Kurdish outrages as a set-off to supposed Armenian Revolutionary Committees.

4. This autumn (1892) Khalil Agha, brother of the above Eghid Oglou Yusuf Agha, while raiding the flocks of Hamsesheikh, killed Krikor, son of Ohannes, for offering some resistance. Nothing was done by the authorities.

5. On the 20th September last Tajeddin and Saifeddin, Hamidiyyé officers of the Hassananli tribe, carried off the sheep of Teghout (Boulanuk). The sheep were only restored on the Teghout Headman giving a bribe of 4 liras to Khalil Agha, who thereupon used his influence to have the sheep restored.

6. In the beginning of August Abdurrazak, a Major of Hamidiyyé Cavalry, and of the Hassananli tribe, carried off 100 sheep from the Armenian village of Youjaly, two hours' distance from Gop. The villagers complained to the Kaïmakam, but nothing was done.

This same Abdurrazak has completely ruined the Armenian village of Kasmik, in the Melazgherd Kaïmakamlik.

7. In the month of August last Sheikh Kiamil, of the village of Eri, with five others, forcibly entered and sacked the house of Ouman Oglou Agop, of the Armenian village of Teghout, of Boulanuk, wounding Agop. An inquiry was made, but nothing done.

Last year Dervish and his brother Sihan and Mohammed Emin, of Hachlu, a Kurdish village two hours distant from Gop, raided from Piran (an Armenian village some two hours and a-half from Gop) forty oxen and four horses, the latter belonging to the Headman of Piran, killing Risgho Oglou Manoukh, a Piran Armenian, who attempted resistance. In fact, the Armenians of Piran have been so persecuted by the Hassananli Kurds since the Erzeroum events of the 20th June, 1890, that, seeing the Gop Kaïmakam did not, or would not, protect them, they have invited Assad Agha, the son of Sefi Agha, a Chief of the Hassananli Kurds, to come and live in their village to protect them against Kurdish raids. As a price of this protection they gave him twenty fields and ten meadows, and are now building him a house in their village. The deeds handing over this property were signed by them in presence of Hashim Bey, the Kaïmakam of Boulanuk, at Gop.

9. In August of 1891 the above Dervish of Hachlu killed two Armenian shepherds of Kharabé Shehr, an Armenian village two hours from Gop, for resisting him when raiding their flocks.

10. In the beginning of September last Faki Mustapha, a brigand, was instigated by the same Dervish of Hachlu to kill Manoukh Oglou Artin, an Armenian, of Sheikh Yakoh village, an hour and a-half from Gop. Nothing was done, though the case was brought to the notice of the Kaïmakam.

11. In the month of August last, Reshid Agha, of the Hassananli tribe, and Captain in the Hamidiyyé Cavalry, together with his brother, raided some 20 oxen and 250 sheep from the Armenian village of Kehkerlu, in the Boulanuk Caza. The Kaïmakam, Hashim Bey, went in pursuit with some zaptiehs, but as the raiders were of the Hamidiyyé Cavalry, the Kaïmakam returned without effecting restitution of the raided property.

12. Again, in August last, Khalid Oglou Riza, of the Hassananli tribe, who is also a Hamidiyyé Major, carried off fifty sheep from Rustem Ghedik, an Armenian village about five hours from Gop. Nothing was done.

In the Caza of Khinis the following cases were brought to my notice:—

1. In July last Afch Faris Oglou, of Heftrenk, carried off the three sons of Hazo, and his three sons-in-law, of the Armenian village of Giuvendik, and only released them on payment of twenty medjidiés and about thirty sheep. Complaints were made to the Kaïmakam at Khinis, but nothing was done.

2. About July last, Ahmed Oglou Battal, of Lahbudak, attempted to carry off four oxen, the property of Moukho, of the Armenian village of Giuvendik. The latter resisted and shot Battal, who also succeeded in shooting Moukho. Both died. The authorities instituted an inquiry and arrested nineteen Armenians of Giuvendik. Ten of these were released on bribing the Mustantik of Khinis, Teifur Effendi. The other nine were still in prison. No Kurds were arrested in connection with the case.

3. In the month of September last Tajeddin (see No. 5 of Boulanuk cases), of the Hassananli tribe, carried off eighty sheep from Giuvendik. The villagers complained, but nothing was done.

4. Tajeddin, the same as in No. 3, carried off six oxen from the Armenian village of Haros about the 1st (13th) August last. Nothing has been done.

5. In August last the same Tajeddin Agha, of the Hassananli tribe, forcibly carried off some 56 kilehs of grain from the Armenians Melkon and Manoukh, of Krimkaya, near Karachoban. No steps were taken by the authorities to punish the offender.

6. Last year Tajeddin and Khalil Agha carried off twelve horses from the Armenian village of Karakeupri. No restitution was made, though frequent representations were made to the Khinis Kaïmakam.

7. In September last, Khalil Agha (the same as in No. 6) carried off fifteen oxen from the Armenian village of Karakeupri. Nothing was done on the villagers' complaints.

8. In July 1891 Jamo and Kado and Mohammed, of the Shadili tribe, carried off six oxen, the property of Alexan Kocheian, of the Armenian village of Haros. The Headman of Haros attempted to get them back, whereupon the Kurds shot him, wounding him in the face. The Kurds were imprisoned for a few days, and then set at liberty.

No. 107.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 361.) *Constantinople, November 28, 1892.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to the information contained in the inclosures to your Lordship's despatches Nos. 213, 218, and 222 respectively, I have observed that a charge is repeated by the Archbishop of Zeitoun and the Archbishop of Furnous, and others, against the Turkish Government of having deliberately caused the death last year of upwards of 500 Armenian male children by having had administered to them impure vaccination lymph.

The report of such an atrocity having been committed formed the subject of careful investigation on the part of the late Sir William White, and I have the honour to inclose herein copies of the correspondence which took place at the time respecting it.

Its perusal will no doubt incline your Lordship to consider that no reason appears to exist for giving credit to the horrible story. I say "appears to exist," for I find it difficult to believe that the Bishop of Zeitoun and others would have ventured to repeat it without being in possession of the strongest possible proofs that they had not been made the victims of a lying report.

I cannot but think that the sympathizers in England with the Armenian movement in Asia Minor should exercise the greatest discretion in the charges they make against the Turkish Government, for by circulating false news they will inevitably injure, instead of improve, their cause.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 107.

Mr. Tebb to Sir W. White.

Rede Hall, Burstow, near Horley, Surrey, June 29, 1892.

Sir,

IN the month of March last the London and other journals published a brief report of an alleged disaster in Zeitoun, Armenia, to about 400 children following vaccination, regarding which a question was asked in the House by Sir John Swinburne. This terrible occurrence has created considerable anxiety in the public mind, and as a Royal Commission is now taking evidence concerning the results of vaccination, I shall esteem it a favour if your Excellency will kindly let me know if there is any foundation for the report, and whether any children have succumbed to vaccination.

I am, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM TEBB.

Inclosure 2 in No. 107.

Sir W. White to Consul Jago.

Sir, *Therapia, August 7, 1891.*

I SHOULD be glad to learn whether you have any information respecting the statement quoted in the inclosed letter from Mr. Tebb that 400 children have lately died after vaccination in Zeitoun.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 107.

Consul Jago to Mr. Tebb.

Sir, *Aleppo, July 20, 1891.*

IN reply to your letter of the 29th ultimo asking for details of an alleged serious disaster at Zeitoun following the vaccination of about 400 children, I beg to inform you that, in spite of inquiries made by me at the time, I could obtain no corroboration of the story, and I do not believe in it.

I have seen nothing in the English press on the matter, but the report must, I presume, have originated in the following manner. Last autumn some of the people of Zeitoun murdered a gendarme and then fired on the troops sent to arrest the murderers. In consequence the town was blockaded for some time to compel the people to deliver up the culprits. During the blockade letters were sent out secretly addressed to various quarters imploring assistance, seeking to excuse their conduct, and placing the responsibility of the outbreak on the Turkish Governor of Marash, who was alleged to have oppressed the people.

Among the accusations laid to his charge was that of purposely supplying, some time before, the Government Doctor (a Christian) sent on an ordinary vaccination tour among the peasantry with impure lymph, thereby causing the deaths of 400 boys (not children), the writers stating that the graves could be opened to verify their statements.

The people implicated in these disturbances are now on their trial here, but since their arrest last autumn I have heard no repetition of the horrible story, which besides is regarded as too incredible for serious discussion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. S. JAGO.

Inclosure 4 in No. 107.

Dr. Dickson to Sir W. White.

Sir, *Constantinople, September 17, 1891.*

ON the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 7th August I inquired at the sitting held by the Board of Health on the 11th ultimo whether the "Administration Sanitaire" could give any information regarding the alleged death of 400 children at Zeitoun, following vaccination, alluded to in that despatch, and I have now the honour of forwarding to your Excellency Dr. Cozzonis' reply, from which it would seem that no children were vaccinated this year at Zeitoun. Dr. Cozzonis does not explain, however, at what period the year commenced. Was it on the 1st or the 13th

January last; or on the 6th August (1st of Moharrem, and commencement of the Mahommedan year)?

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. D. DICKSON.

Inclosure 5 in No. 107.

Dr. Cozzonis to Dr. Dickson.

M. le Délégué,

EN réponse à votre demande faite dans la séance du Conseil du 30 Juillet (11 Août) 1891, l'Administration a l'honneur de vous informer que le Ministre de l'Intérieur, auquel elle s'était adressée, vient de lui faire savoir que d'après une dépêche du Vilayet d'Alep aucune vaccination n'a eu lieu, cette année, à Zeitoun, et que par conséquent le bruit répandu est sans consistance.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) Dr. COZZONIS, *Inspecteur-Général.*

Inclosure 6 in No. 107.

Consul Jago to Sir W. White.

Aleppo, August 28, 1891.

Sir,

IN reply to your Excellency's despatch dated the 7th instant, inclosing a copy of a letter from Mr. Tebb, respecting a report that 400 children have lately died after vaccination in Zeitoun, I have the honour to transmit herewith the copy of a letter which I addressed to Mr. Tebb on the 20th ultimo, in reply to his inquiries on the same subject of the 29th June last.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. S. JAGO.

Inclosure 7 in No. 107.

Sir W. White to Mr. Tebb.

Therapia, September 18, 1892.

Sir,

IN reply to your letter of the 29th June last, I beg to inform you that I have caused careful inquiries to be made into the report of 400 children having died consequent on their vaccination.

The Board of Health at Constantinople has received a telegram from Aleppo stating that the report is devoid of all foundation.

Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo has also informed me that, in spite of inquiries made by him at the time, he could obtain no corroboration of the story.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 108.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received December* 14.)

(No. 364. Confidential.)

Constantinople, December 7, 1892.

My Lord,

WITH reference to previous correspondence on the subject of the imprisonment of the Archbishop of Zeitoun, I have quite recently recalled the attention of the Porte to the matter.

On my inquiring of Said Pasha, Minister for Foreign Affairs, whether the case had been referred to the Court of Cassation here, his Excellency replied that he was not in a position to answer the question, but that he would seize the first opportunity of mentioning the subject to the Minister of Justice, and that he would recommend to him that there should be a fair and proper revision of the sentence which has already been pronounced against the Archbishop by the Criminal Court of

Aleppo. Said Pasha gave me every assurance that the matter would receive the most careful consideration as soon as it comes before the Court of Cassation in this capital.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 109.

Minasse Tchéraz to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received December* 16.)

M. le Ministre, 33, *De Vere Gardens, Londres, ce* 16 *Décembre*, 1892.

JE reçois de la Prison Centrale d'Alep un nouveau rapport, dont les auteurs me prient d'en communiquer la substance à votre Seigneurie.

Mgr. Garabed Kétchéyan, Archevêque de Zeytoun, a appris que Mr. Gladstone lui a fait l'honneur de répondre à sa requête du 17 Août, mais que le Vali, Arif Pacha, a eu le toupet de retenir la lettre de M. le Premier Ministre.

Arif Pacha continue de persécuter, à Zeytoun, à Marash, à Aïntab, à Kilis, et à Alep, les Arméniens qui possèdent quelque fortune ou quelque influence sur le peuple. Il vient de faire arrêter, dans l'Hôtel Ararat à Alep, et jeter en prison, M. le Dr. Dikran Enfiédjian, médecin Arménien, qui était venu de Constantinople, il y a quatre ans, pour exercer en Cilicie sa profession. Il a fait également jeter en prison les tailleurs Arméniens, Garabed, Haroutyoun, et Lévon Krikov, qui avaient commis le crime de s'apitoyer sur le sort des détenus Zeytouniens à demi-nus et de leur offrir des vêtements. Il a fait emprisonner, de plus, les nommés Roupen, Haïgazn, et quatre autres artisans Arméniens, afin de terroriser toutes les classes de la population. Les dernières victimes sont le prêtre Ghévont Nahabédian, de Marash, MM. Pilibbos Larkis, et le Dr. Boghossian, d'Aïntab, arrêtés, sur le rapport d'un espion d'Arabkir, sous l'inculpation d'être des révolutionnaires!

Ce Vali-fléau a envoyé dans toutes les villes Arméniennes de la Cilicie des gendarmes et des collecteurs qui encaissent les impôts à coups de cravache et en emprisonnant les vieillards et les pauvres, dont ils mettent aux enchères les meubles les plus indispensables. Yuzbachi Véli Agha, qui avait impunément insulté, à Aïntab, M. le Consul de France, parcourt le pays à la tête de 150 gendarmes et se permet toutes sortes d'injustices et de cruautés pour encaisser les impôts.

Les condamnés, au nombre de vingt-six, attendent en vain, depuis le 20 Avril, la décision de la Cour de Cassation de Constantinople. Pour isoler complètement Mgr. Nigoghos Tavtian, Archevêque de Marash, on a emprisonné ses domestiques, Markar et Assadour, qui lui apportaient en prison sa nourriture. On l'a d'ailleurs condamné à mort, avec la religieuse Élizabeth et son frère Artin, le photographe Hovnan Ohannessian, de Marash, le prêtre Ghévont, et un autre, tous les six accusés d'avoir participé à l'assassinat du gendarme Osman! Ils ont adressé à la Cour de Cassation de Constantinople une requête où ils réfutent les accusations formulées contre eux; mais les Juges de Stamboul, qui acquittent des monstres comme Moussa Bey, sont sans pitié pour tout accusé qui a le malheur d'être Chrétien.

Dans mon rapport du 18 Octobre, j'avais pris la liberté de rappeler à votre Seigneurie l'extrême urgence de la question. Je mentionnais le fait que huit détenus étaient déjà morts; et j'ajoutais que si l'on n'intervenait pas à temps, "les autres prisonniers pourraient succomber aux tortures du cachot d'Alep." Les auteurs du rapport que je viens de résumer m'apprennent en effet que deux jeunes détenus sont morts depuis. Si la bureaucratie Turque n'est pas fâchée de se débarrasser ainsi de raïas Arméniens qui aspirent à jouir d'une administration honnête et capable, les Puissances Signataires du Traité de Berlin ne sauraient rester indifférentes au martyre de ceux à qui elles ont promis une administration pareille. J'ose exprimer l'espoir que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique sera le premier à intervenir pour mettre un terme aux horreurs commises en Cilicie, en face de cette Ile de Chypre où flotte le drapeau Anglais, messager de justice et de liberté.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) MINASSE TCHÉRAZ,
Ex-Délegué Arménien à Londres et au Congrès de Berlin.

No. 110.

Foreign Office to M. Minas Tchéraz.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 23, 1892.

I AM directed by the Earl of Rosebery to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant requesting the intervention of Her Majesty's Government on behalf of the Armenians of Cilicia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 111.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received December* 26.)

(No. 371.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 16, 1892.

I OBSERVE in a telegram published in the "Daily News" of the 6th instant, under the heading "The Armenian Commission," that it is stated that "two Commissioners, Baki Bey and Aziz Bey, both Members of the Council of State, have been appointed by the Sultan to proceed at once to Armenia, and report fully on the situation there."

I have taken pains to ascertain what reliance is to be placed on this statement, and I find that it is inaccurate.

The facts of the case are as follows:

Baki Bey has recently accompanied, as Secretary, a Turkish General Officer to Mosul, in Asia Minor, on a Special Mission, with the object of inquiring into matters relating to the incursion on the part of certain Persian Kurdish tribes into Turkish territory.

I should not have troubled your Lordship with this despatch had it not been that the "Daily News" is considered in England as being usually correct in the statements it makes with regard to Armenian affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

No. 112.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(*Received December* 26.)

(No. 381.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 20, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a Report which I have received from Colonel Chermside respecting the Hamidié militia cavalry regiments now in process of formation in Kurdistan.

Colonel Chermside requests that his Report may be forwarded to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for War.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure in No. 112.

Colonel Chermside to Sir Clare Ford.

Sir, *Constantinople, December* 15, 1892.

I HAVE the honour to request your Excellency to forward the following, for the information of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for War.

Hamidieh Cavalry.—Mushir Mohammed Zeki Pasha has visited numerous districts and cities of the IVth Ordu Circumscriptum in connection with the formation and embodiment of the Hamidieh cavalry.

At Erzingian, Erzeroum, Van, Bayazid, Mush, Bitlis, Sivas, Mardin, and Diarbekir, inauguration ceremonies have taken place. The standards are made here and sent to Kurdistan, where at a parade at one of the principal cities they are

solemnly presented to the officers and representatives of the regiments. Thirty-three of the first thirty-five regiments have been definitely organized, and the muster rolls are said to average nearly 500 names each. Of the forty-eight regiments previously reported the remaining thirteen are in progress of formation, and some, as in the case of the 46th Jibranlu Regiment at Mush, under Khalid Agha's Chieftainship, are sufficiently advanced in enrolment to have received their colours.

The Staffs and the commanding officers of the thirty-three regiments have been gazetted, *i.e.*, 1st to 31st and 34th and 35th.

Officers from the regular cavalry are appointed to command, as Mir-Alais (Colonels) or Kaïmakams (Lieutenant-Colonels). Kurdish Chiefs are associated with them as Kaïmakams. No Chief or commanding officer, however, have been gazetted to the 18th Regiment.

Each squadron is commanded by a Yuzbashi (Captain) from the regulars.

Fourteen regiments are commanded by Mir-Alais promoted to that rank from Kaïmakams in the regulars; the remaining nineteen are commanded by Kaïmakams promoted to that rank from Psinbashis in the regular cavalry.

The squadron commanders are either Yuzbashis promoted from that rank in the regulars, Yuzbashis promoted from the rank Vakeel-Yuzbashi (2nd Captain) in the regulars, or are Vakeel-Yuzbashis promoted from Mulazim-Evvel (1st Lieutenant) in the regulars. From the regular army there have been appointed one First Secretary to each regiment. From the tribesmen there have been appointed, in addition to the tribal Kaïmakams, a Second Secretary in each regiment, an Imam in each regiment, a tribesman as Vakeel-Yuzbashi to each squadron, and a tribesman as standard-bearer to each regiment, with the rank of Mulazim-Sani. The 1st regiment has five squadrons, the 18th and 19th five squadrons, the 35th six squadrons; all others four squadrons.

Ferik Ibrahim Pasha is the General in command of the Hamadieh cavalry. On the recommendation of the Commission here under Mushir Shakir Pasha, it has been decided by Iradé to raise the total number of auxiliary cavalry regiments to 100. The formation of the regiments of Southern Kurdistan in the VIth Ordu Circumscription has accordingly been enjoined on Mushir Rejeb Pasha, officer commanding VIth Ordu, and also that of the Hamidieh regiments of the Arab tribes of Irak. A Commission of Organization has been appointed at Mosul. So far no serious training, if any, has been carried out, and it is early to judge what will be the practical value of the system. From a private letter from one of Her Majesty's Consular officers, I hear that in most Kurdish villages one or two men in Hamidieh uniform are to be seen, and it is only what one would expect that, once in possession of a uniform, it will be constantly worn for all occupations till worn out. Many men are also seen with the lambskin busby with brass badge only, very possibly because they have no uniform.

In Northern Kurdistan the very important Startushi Kurds, occupying the district between Van and Mosul, form a notable exception, in that they have furnished no contingent; they inhabit parts of both the IVth and VIth Ordu Circumscriptions. It is said that the Arabs of Mesopotamia, influenced by the example of the Miran and Milli tribes on the confines of Kurdistan and Arabistan, wish to form similar regiments. If this be the case, I imagine it is more likely due to the ambition and spirit of emulation of the Chiefs, combined with their wish for Government pay, than to any wish of the tribesmen themselves.

The contingent value of this militia cavalry is quite problematical, and it is probable, as pointed out earlier, that the matter has been organized on far too great a scale for real efficiency. In any case, the bulk of the force could only be employed locally. If distant displacements were intended which would separate the men widely from their flocks and encampments, the numbers available for such service would dwindle enormously.

The officers gazetted are to leave shortly for their posts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE.

No. 113.

Sir Clare Ford to the Earl of Rosebery.—(Received December 26.)

(No. 383.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December 21, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of six despatches addressed by Mr. Vice-Consul Devey to Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting on the position of affairs in the Vilayet of Van.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANCIS CLARE FORD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 113.

Vice-Consul Devey to Consul Graves.

Sir, *Van, October 26, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that about four weeks ago a party of nine Kurds were visiting some villages of Shattakh Caza in this vilayet, and, while passing the night in the Armenian village, Zizans, shots were fired in at the window of the house where they lodged, killing two men and wounding a third. When the survivors went outside to search for their assailants they could see no one.

The Kurds were, I believe, villagers from Norduz Caza, amongst them being Yakub Agha (the father of Shakir, who was accused of participation in the murder of an Armenian named Mohsi Sahag, an incident reported in my despatches Nos. 27 and 30 of last year), and probably they were levying or attempting to levy blackmail in the Armenian villages. One of those killed was a fugitive from justice on account of the murder just mentioned.

Fourteen villagers were arrested from Zizans, but all except two are now at liberty; also three persons (one being the son of the murdered Mohsi Sahag) were imprisoned at Shattakh. And I now hear that eighteen peasants of a village, Kachet, situated between Zizans and Shattakh, have been arrested, possibly on account of having abetted the murder, or perhaps on a charge of seditious practices merely.

The authorities are making special efforts to seize the guilty parties, though there is little circumstantial evidence to rely upon.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 113.

Vice-Consul Devey to Consul Graves.

Sir, *Van, October 27, 1892.*

SEVERAL murders have been committed in this neighbourhood lately. A corpse of a Kurd was found upon Mount Varak; but his companion, who escaped, states that some Kurdish robbers were carrying off cattle, and attacked them with intent to rob. A month ago a zaptieh named Tahir, of Verishin village, and a Turk, of Van, were murdered near Kharaba Khan, about half-way between Van and Shattakh, at the same spot where a zaptieh was slaughtered, under similar circumstances, just a year ago:* a guard of zaptiehs ought to be, and I believe will be, posted permanently there. About three weeks ago four Armenians going to trade in Norduz Caza were plundered by Kurds at the Aras Gedik (pass); and one (a Norduzli villager, respecting whom no complaint has been made) was killed by the sword. Two Armenian Notables of Van, Terzibashian Artin Effendi and Derbogosian Ohannes Effendi, were fired upon in this town a few weeks ago. The former was wounded, but is quite well now; his assailant, an Armenian, escaped. The latter was not hurt. On the night of the 16th instant Nouri Effendi, a police agent, was murdered in the suburbs of Van.

These crimes do not call for much remark except the last one, which created some local excitement, as it followed on the recent murders at Zizans and at Kharaba Khan, and resembled them in this respect only, viz., the victim Moslem, and the perpetrators

* *Vide* No. 30 of the 7th September, 1891.

of the deed most likely Armenians. In the last case, the house of a respectable Armenian family at the spot of the death of Nouri Effendi was searched, and five brothers out of six, named Shadvorian, were arrested. The Armenian community were inclined to regard the action of the authorities in making these arrests as unduly severe, but it has since been justified by discovery of circumstantial proofs, and by the confession of the brother, named Manug.

He states, I believe, that on the afternoon of the 16th instant he was called into the garden of their house by the Armenians named Terlemezian Panos, Kankenian Ohannes, and two others known as Bagdasar and Melkon, and whilst there a man addressed them over the wall, saying, "Nouri Effendi will be at such and such a place to dine as guest to-night; see that you do your business well." Some time after midnight these four Armenians waited for and killed Nouri Effendi, who was passing intoxicated, and then knocked at the door, rousing Manug, to whom they said, "The business is done," and escaped through the house by the garden. His brothers had no knowledge of the affair.

There can be little doubt, therefore, that he aided and abetted the murder in some degree. The Armenian, named Melkon, is rumoured to have been taken to-day at Vostan, and this malefactor is known to be the assailant of Artin Effendi above mentioned.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 113.

Vice-Consul Devey to Consul Graves.

Sir, *Van, October 27, 1892.*

I HAVE to state, with regret, that the periodic searchings for seditious matter among Armenians of this district have recurred during the last few weeks, and are not entirely fruitless. A considerable number of private houses and two or three monastery churches have been visited; in one case, two unsigned letters were found of distinctly seditious character, and some prohibited song-books, and documents or objects of presumably like character have also been seized. A few Armenians have been arrested here and there, but I have not as yet precise information as to who and how many they may be. Under present circumstances, and in view of the murders lately committed, which have been reported to you, I have not thought it desirable to point out to his Excellency the Vali that Armenian sentiment is noticeably hurt, and that domiciliary visits might only be resorted to, by a Government that desires the confidence and good opinion of its subjects, in extreme cases.

Hovsep Effendi, the Bishop representing the Patriarchate here, is visiting the districts of this vilayet, and has not returned.

In reporting a crime committed at the village Sikhkeh (No. 21 of the 27th July, 1892), the Acting Vice-Consul stated that local authorities surmised, or pretended to surmise, that a band of malefactors were committing crimes for the purpose of political agitation. I venture to express the opinion that it is highly probable that some small conspiracy of the kind does exist among the lowest Armenian outcasts (such as Melkon mentioned in my last letter), but that they will be found to number a bare half-score or so, and I trust that before long all will have been apprehended.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

Inclosure 4 in No. 113.

Vice-Consul Devey to Consul Graves.

Sir, *Van, October 27, 1892.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the brigand Haidar, nephew, I believe, of a certain Muro who was killed not long ago as an outlaw, has made his submission to local authorities, and is detained here in case any complaint shall be levied against him.

Mustafa Bey, son of Abdurrizak, who resides near Karagunduz village on Lake Archag, and who, I believe, from time to time, has visited and harried Armenian villagers of the Havatzor sub-district, has been imprisoned in Van.

His Excellency the Vali having lately summoned several of the Aghas of surrounding districts who are Chiefs of various small "Ashirets," has induced them to give a written promise that they will cause to be restored any cattle driven off from villages within their scope, and not to allow passage to stolen beasts or such as may reasonably be looked upon with suspicion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

Inclosure 5 in No. 113.

Vice-Consul Devey to Consul Graves.

Van, November 8, 1892.

Sir,

I HAVE some few disjointed remarks to make upon the murders recently reported to you.

With reference to the incident which occurred near Sikhkeh village, and was commented on in Mr. Fitzmaurice's despatches, dated the 20th June and 27th July, judgment has been passed in the Sheri Court condemning the villagers to pay the sum of 64,000 piastres (£T. 640) blood-money for the two lives within the space of three years. The village will appeal to the Court of Cassation in Constantinople.

I have reason to believe that fourteen persons, now in custody, were implicated in the assassination of the police agent, Nouri Effendi, but the suspect Melkon, whose arrest was rumoured, is still at liberty.

It is stated that an Armenian named Sarkis Diplosh has been seized at Arjish, and that there is strong evidence of his having committed the recent murders of a zaptieh and a Turk near Kharaba Khan, on the Shattakh road.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

Inclosure 6 in No. 113.

Vice-Consul Devey to Consul Graves.

Van, November 9, 1892.

Sir,

MGR. HOVSEP AYVAZIAN, the representative of the Armenian Patriarchate in Van, has left unexpectedly and, so to say, surreptitiously for Constantinople, whilst making a tour in the districts round Lake Van.

With reference to my despatch of the 27th October, I hear that some fifty Armenians were arrested on account of what are presumed to be seditious charges during the last four weeks, and that there are still nearly this number in custody. The searchings of private houses (which were conducted in good order) have to all appearance ceased for the time being. Complaints have reached me of Armenians being improperly treated when put in the local prison; zaptiehs unknown are accused of outrageous conduct. Without taking any active steps to substantiate these charges, I privately made mention of them to his Excellency the Vali, who did not appear to believe in the existence of any irregularities; but I doubt not that his Excellency's attention will be directed to the subject, and that no ground will be allowed to remain for a repetition of them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GEORGE POLLARD DEVEY.

No. 114.

The Earl of Rosebery to Sir J. Pauncefote.

(No. 289 A.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 28, 1892.

MR. HENRY WHITE called upon me to-day, and made the following communication:—

The Government of the United States, having had under their serious consideration the treatment experienced by the Christian inhabitants of Turkey, were of opinion that it behoved Christian nations, more especially Great Britain and the United States, to act cordially together in dealing with the Ottoman Government. Mr. White was therefore instructed to inform me of their earnest desire to act concurrently and harmoniously with Her Majesty's Government in protecting and vindicating the rights of the subjects or citizens of either nation in Turkey, subject to the reservation by the United States of complete liberty and independence of action when found advisable.

In thanking Mr. White for this communication, I assured him that this amicable spirit of co-operation was fully shared and cordially reciprocated by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROSEBERY.

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